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INDIA UPDATE

Highlights of this week

Andhra Pradesh

- Anam Ramanarayana Reddy laid the foundation stone for a ₹1.80 crore sports development centre in Atmakur, spread across 20 acres to nurture rural talent. The project will be completed in six months and upgraded into a world-class stadium.
- The underground drainage and sewage treatment project in Tadepalligudem has been revived with ₹88.18 crore sanctioned under AMRUT 2.0. The works, starting by end-February, aim to address long-standing sewage and flooding issues.

Delhi

- CM Rekha Gupta flagged off development projects worth over ₹300 crore across Badarpur, Sangam Vihar and Deoli in South Delhi. The works cover roads, drainage, water supply, lighting, parks and community facilities, marking a major push for regional rejuvenation.
- After a fog-linked fatal accident, the DMRC has enhanced safety at construction sites by installing LED rope lights, blinkers and deploying 270 trained traffic marshals. Nearly 20 km of barricades are now better illuminated to improve visibility and guide traffic.
- The Delhi Police launched the eParikshan mobile app to conduct a household census and verification drive along Republic Day parade routes. The app enabled real-time data collection to strengthen preventive security ahead of R-Day celebrations.

Goa

- A multi-state probe was launched into the alleged theft of ₹400 crore in demonetised notes from containers transiting via Goa, with four arrests made so far. Police are probing possible hawala links, while the main suspect remains at large.
- A joint inspection began at the proposed Unity Mall site in Chimbel to assess its impact on drainage and ecology linked to Toyar Lake. The findings will guide project feasibility and environmental safeguards before further approvals.

Gujarat

- The Amdavad Municipal Corporation halted the CG Road development project after an 18-metre-wide stretch was found narrowed to just nine metres by the contractor. Civic leaders ordered an immediate stop and opposition parties demanded stricter on-ground monitoring by AMC engineers.

Haryana

- The Centre directed Haryana and Uttar Pradesh to divert water from the Munak Canal and Upper Ganga Canal to boost the Yamuna's environmental flow. It also ordered drain audits and wastewater quality improvements to curb pollution and revive the river.
- CM Nayab Singh Saini met David Eby to explore strategic cooperation between Haryana and British Columbia in clean energy, technology, logistics and sustainable development, leveraging their complementary strengths.

Himachal Pradesh

- Two days after snowfall, still 832 roads are blocked, including three national highways, while power supply remains hit with 1,942 transformers damaged, though restoration is underway amid continued disruption to transport, tourism and essential services.
- A yellow alert was issued by the State Meteorological Department for all Himachal districts till January 28, with widespread rain and snowfall expected and heavy snow likely on January 27, while conditions are set to improve from January 29.

Karnataka

- Karnataka and the Centre clashed over implementing the Kasturirangan report on the Western Ghats, with the state reiterating its Cabinet decision to reject the draft despite Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change seeking a middle path.
- The government rolled out an automatic land conversion system for renewable energy projects to fast-track approvals, simplify procedures and cut delays. The move is expected to boost ease of doing business and accelerate clean energy investments across the state.

Upcoming News/Events

Andhra Pradesh

- Ahead of the Budget Session, N Chandrababu Naidu directed TDP MPs to prioritise state development by actively raising constituency issues in Parliament. He urged them to engage Union ministers and officials to secure Central funds and fast-track projects.
- N Chandrababu Naidu will attend Araku Utsav-2026 in Araku Valley on January 29 to promote tourism, tribal culture and local livelihoods. The festival, part of Visakha Utsav, will conclude with a grand finale on February 1 amid tight security arrangements.

Delhi

- The Public Works Department will upgrade crash barriers and guard rails on Ring Road and major flyovers with a ₹96.77 lakh safety project. The work, aimed at accident-prone high-speed stretches in Delhi, will begin by end-January.
- The PWD is planning a new flyover linking Dwarka Expressway with Bijwasan railway station to ease congestion in southwest Delhi. The proposal includes a feasibility study and a 1.5-km extension of the existing Bijwasan flyover to handle rising traffic.
- The Delhi government announced plans to build a new flyover on the Outer Ring Road from Keshopur to Haiderpur to ease congestion in northwest Delhi. The PWD has approved a feasibility study to finalise design, alignment and execution timelines.

Goa

- Pusapati Ashok Gajapathi Raju said the creation of Kushavati district will strengthen decentralised governance by improving administrative efficiency and service delivery. He added the move will bring decision-making closer and support regional development.
- The National Green Tribunal has given respondents four weeks to file affidavits on the demolition status of the Bastian Riviera nightclub at Morjim. The case seeks execution of a GCZMA order directing removal of illegal structures along the Chapora River.

Gujarat

- Resurfacing work on the National Highways Authority of India's Ahmedabad-Vadodara Expressway will cause traffic delays for up to three months, with repairs underway on a 39-km stretch. Commuters are advised to plan ahead as travel time may extend to around two hours until April.

Haryana

- The Haryana government reopened the CHEERAG admissions portal till January 30 for students who missed earlier deadlines due to delayed Class X results. The scheme offers free private school education to students from families earning up to ₹1.8 lakh annually.
- The World Bank approved a ₹5,700-crore loan for Haryana's Jal Sanrakshit project to strengthen canals and make it India's first water-secure state, said Nayab Singh Saini, with funds disbursed from 2026-2032.

Himachal Pradesh

- The long-pending embankment project along the Beas River in Himachal Pradesh remains stalled as the Centre has yet to clear the DPR, leaving thousands of families vulnerable to repeated monsoon flooding even in 2026.
- Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board Limited clarified that installing smart meters will not affect existing subsidies, including free power up to 125 units, nor increase electricity bills, as the devices only measure consumption without altering tariffs or billing policies.

Karnataka

- The High Court directed the state to permit bike taxi services by allowing motorcycles to be registered as transport vehicles, subject to conditions under the Motor Vehicles Act. It ruled that services by aggregators cannot be denied solely due to absence of state guidelines.
- Nokia has expressed interest in setting up a Global Capability Centre and expanding research operations in Karnataka, including Tier-2 cities. Industries Minister M B Patil said the state has assured full support for the company's future expansion plans.

INDIA UPDATE

Highlights of this week

Madhya Pradesh

- A month after launch, the Bhopal Metro is recording low ridership of about 1,290 passengers a day due to limited connectivity and long service gaps, with operating costs far exceeding revenue and forcing an early schedule revision.

Mumbai

- Maharashtra's public works, forest, and water supply and sanitation departments emerged as the top performers in the state's 150-day e-governance reform programme. The assessment was conducted by the Quality Council of India, according to the CM's office.
- Urban researcher Abhijit Ekbote has created a free online mapping tool to assess mangrove loss from the proposed Versova–Dahisar Coastal Road. The tool, hosted on CityResource.in, clearly maps the road's alignment across green and built-up areas.
- The State Board for Wildlife cleared a BMC road project through Sanjay Gandhi National Park, diverting 2.59 hectares of park land to improve connectivity with WEH and key tunnels. The approval comes amid concerns over rising ecological pressure.

Pune

- Maharashtra approved an integrated AI-enabled CCTV surveillance project for Pimpri-Chinchwad to strengthen crime detection, traffic management, crowd monitoring and emergency response, marking a major boost to city policing.
- MSRDC has dropped the proposal to deploy air ambulances on the Pune–Mumbai Expressway, citing high operating costs of about ₹5 lakh per hour and logistical challenges of helicopter operations in the hilly terrain despite frequent serious accidents.
- After a long delay, the PMC formally approved five zonal medical officer posts, granting statutory status and unlocking long-pending promotion avenues for civic doctors who had been performing supervisory roles without official recognition.

Punjab

- Punjab farmers under the Samyukta Kisan Morcha held tractor marches across the state on Republic Day, demanding withdrawal of the Electricity Bill 2025 and other farm-related reforms, while reiterating calls for MSP guarantee and rollback of labour codes.
- Punjab's Rural Development Department has started clearing ₹663 crore in pending electricity dues of 4,607 Gram Panchayat Water Supply Committees using untied funds from the 15th Finance Commission, with transfers directed by January 25.

Rajasthan

- Ajmer marked the 77th Republic Day with flag hoisting ceremonies across the district, highlighted by a police mock drill, disaster-rescue tableau and cultural performances at the PLG, where Minister Suresh Rawat unfurled the tricolour and athletes were honoured.

Tamil Nadu

- Tamil Nadu has distributed 2,663 Turtle Excluder Devices free to mechanised fishing boats to prevent Olive Ridley turtle deaths during the nesting season, with installations underway and patrols intensified as 427 turtle mortalities have been recorded so far.
- 12 People from TN, including former CRPF chief K Vijay Kumar, polio specialist Dr H V Hande and IIT Madras director V Kamakoti, have been named Padma Shri awardees, recognising contributions across public service, medicine, education and literature.

Telangana

- The Human Rights Commission took suo motu cognisance of a sanitation worker's death at Yousufguda dumping yard, citing negligence and lack of safety safeguards, and directed the GHMC to submit a detailed report by February 23, including compensation details.
- UPC Volt has signed an MoU with the government to invest ₹5,000 crore in an AI-ready data centre at Bharat Future City, integrated with renewable energy. The project is expected to generate over 3,000 jobs during construction and around 800 jobs during operations.

Uttar Pradesh

- CM Yogi Adityanath said the 2026–27 state budget should place public welfare at its core, focusing on improving lives of the poor, farmers, women and youth. He directed officials to align proposals with development, safety and effective use of resources.
- Uttar Pradesh recorded a sharp rise in road fatalities in 2025, with 27,205 deaths—up 12.8% from 2024—despite only a moderate increase in accidents. The faster rise in deaths highlights worsening crash severity and setbacks to the state's 2030 road safety targets.

Upcoming News/Events

Madhya Pradesh

- Madhya Pradesh will observe 2026 as the 'Year of Agriculture', with the governor highlighting increased budgetary support and multi-pronged efforts to boost farmer welfare, dairy development and profitable animal husbandry across the state.

Mumbai

- Mumbai is set to add 1,500 electric buses to BEST's fleet later this year after CESL floated a tender under the PM E-Drive Scheme. The buses will be procured on a wet-lease model, with operators handling operations and infrastructure on a per-km payment basis.
- Former BEST retirees announced an indefinite chain hunger strike at Azad Maidan from Jan 27 to protest the non-payment of gratuity and other retirement dues. They said benefits worth several lakhs have been pending for over three years despite repeated assurances.
- MSRTC launched the 'Balasaheb Thackeray – Sange Teerthatana' scheme to promote affordable pilgrimage tourism with concessional group tours from all 251 depots. The initiative offers 50% fare discounts with nearly 1,000 buses operating daily.

Pune

- The NHAI will open both Khambataki tunnels for full public traffic from June 2026 after successful trials confirmed smooth operations and safety systems. The project will bypass the accident-prone ghat section, ensuring faster and safer travel on the highway.
- Maharashtra will start producing the goatpox vaccine at its Pune-based IVBP, becoming the first government institute in India to do so. The move aims to cut dependence on private suppliers and ensure timely, large-scale availability for livestock farmers.
- Maharashtra will revamp the panel overseeing hysterectomies in Beed and mandate quarterly reviews after a surge in surgeries among sugarcane workers raised concerns of coercion during harvest seasons.

Punjab

- CM Bhagwant Mann said the AAP government will fulfil its pre-poll promise of a ₹1,000 monthly stipend to women in the upcoming state Budget, while also highlighting tourism as a key driver for jobs and economic growth.
- Cold conditions are expected to persist across parts of Punjab and Haryana, with Hoshiarpur likely to remain the coldest at around 3.3°C, while Chandigarh may record a low near 4.8°C and other cities in both states continue to experience biting cold.

Rajasthan

- Rajasthan announced plans to provide 1.5 lakh jobs as the recruitment process began, even as families who donated organs to save lives were honoured at Republic Day events, where sparse crowds turned up due to cold weather in Jodhpur.

Tamil Nadu

- The state has planned to launch a ₹2.8-crore higher-education awareness drive for Class 11 government school students and parents, aiming to guide over 3.58 lakh students on college options, skill courses and scholarships before January 31.
- Despite Phase One of Coimbatore's Western Ring Road nearing completion, delays in fund and administrative sanction have stalled Phase Two, raising concerns over continued traffic congestion in the city's western suburbs.

Telangana

- The Telangana government is planning amendments to the GST law to close loopholes that allow defaulters a three-year delay, enabling quicker action and recovery within the same assessment year to boost tax collections.
- Mulugu police will deploy a QR code-based tracking system at the Medaram jatara from January 28–31, issuing 25,000 tags mainly for children and the elderly to quickly trace missing persons and reunite them with families.

Uttar Pradesh

- CM Yogi Adityanath has directed that construction of the 594-km Ganga Expressway completed by end-Feb 2026, calling it vital for connectivity and growth. The project spans 12 districts, benefits over 500 villages, and is undergoing advanced quality testing.
- Uttar Pradesh is likely to see night temperatures rise by 3–5°C on January 27–28, with widespread rainfall bringing temporary relief from the cold spell. Dense morning fog may persist in some plains districts on January 26–27 but is expected to clear during the day.

GLOBAL UPDATE**Highlights of this week****Africa**

- Dubai-based Mark Cables has completed a €180 million, 200 MW thermal power plant in Burkina Faso in six months, aiming to ease the power deficit and reduce reliance on imported electricity in a country with low access rates.
- South Sudan's military has ordered civilians, UN mission personnel and humanitarian workers to leave three counties in Jonglei State. The evacuation is ahead of a planned military operation targeting opposition forces in the area.

America

- Mexico is reviewing oil shipments to Cuba amid fears of U.S. retaliation, after Venezuela's supplies stopped and Washington ramped up pressure. While Claudia Sheinbaum publicly backs the aid, officials say cuts or a halt remain possible under threats from Donald Trump.
- Canada PM Mark Carney said the upcoming USMCA review would be rigorous, describing Donald Trump as a tough negotiator. He added that Trump's recent comments should be viewed in the context of ongoing trade talks.

Asia Pacific

- Indonesia received its first three Rafale fighter jets from France under a multi-billion-dollar defence deal, a defence ministry official said. The delivery marks a significant upgrade to the country's ageing military capabilities.
- The U.S. and South Korea agreed to deepen cooperation on Seoul's plans to acquire a nuclear-powered submarine. The understanding was reached during talks between U.S. defence official Elbridge Colby and South Korean Defence Minister Ahn Gyu-back.

China

- China advised its citizens to avoid travelling to Japan during the Lunar New Year, citing security concerns and rising crimes amid tensions over Japan's remarks on Taiwan. The warning comes as Chinese airlines extend free cancellations and Chinese tourist arrivals to Japan decline sharply.

Europe

- Several European countries, including Britain, have lost their measles elimination status after a sharp rise in cases in 2024, World Health Organization said. The WHO warned the resurgence reflects falling vaccination rates and urged governments to boost immunisation to protect vulnerable populations.
- India and the EU have concluded negotiations on a historic free trade deal, expected to be formally signed after legal vetting and implemented within a year. The pact aims to boost trade and investment between the two partners, whose bilateral trade stood at \$136.5 billion in FY2025.

Middle East

- UAE said it will not allow its airspace, land or waters to be used for hostile military action against Iran, reaffirming neutrality and regional stability. The statement follows heightened tensions after U.S. warnings to Tehran amid ongoing protests and nuclear concerns.
- Syria and Jordan signed an agreement to supply around 4 million cubic metres of natural gas per day via Jordan to support Syria's strained electricity grid, building on a broader Qatar-backed regional energy arrangement.

Pakistan

- Pakistan's central bank kept its key policy rate unchanged at 10.5%, going against expectations of a cut, citing the need to maintain price stability. Policymakers said the stance would help balance inflation control with sustainable economic growth.

United Kingdom

- Britain's top five banks committed up to £11 billion in export-focused lending to help firms expand abroad, backed by government guarantees. Actual lending will depend on commercial viability and repayment terms.
- Prime Minister Keir Starmer and U.S. President Donald Trump discussed the need to enhance security in the Arctic during a phone call, Downing Street said. The talks highlighted shared concerns over stability in the strategically important region.

United States

- Around 31,000 nurses and healthcare workers went on strike at Kaiser Permanente facilities in California and Hawaii after talks broke down, alleging unfair labour practices. The open-ended strike affects dozens of hospitals and clinics as negotiations continue.

Upcoming News/Events**Africa**

- Tanzania expects to sign a deal before June to revive its stalled \$42 billion LNG project led by Equinor and Shell, unlocking vast offshore gas reserves. Production from the mega project is projected to begin in about eight years, the government said.
- Libya will sign a 25-year oil development deal with TotalEnergies and ConocoPhillips, involving over \$20 billion in foreign-financed investment. Prime Minister Abdulhamid al-Dbeibah said the agreement aims to boost production, attract long-term investment and stabilise the country's energy sector.

America

- The Bank of Canada is expected to hold its policy rate at 2.25% on Wednesday, but economists remain split on the path ahead. Future monetary policy will hinge on economic uncertainty, especially the outcome of U.S. trade negotiations.
- Canada PM Mark Carney is likely to visit India in early March as Canada intensifies its trade diversification strategy. The visit is expected to result in agreements covering uranium, energy, critical minerals and artificial intelligence, signalling a deeper economic partnership between the two countries.

Asia Pacific

- Cambodia will join U.S. President Donald Trump's Board of Peace, Prime Minister Hun Manet announced, calling the move a sign of the country's goodwill. He said the decision reflects Cambodia's strong commitment to promoting global peace.
- Sri Lanka's central bank is expected to keep its key policy rate unchanged at 7.75% on Wednesday, according to a Reuters poll. The decision comes ahead of an IMF review of the sixth tranche under the \$2.9 billion bailout programme.

China

- Chinese President Xi Jinping called Vietnam's newly reappointed leader To Lam to push for deeper cooperation in regional and global affairs, Chinese state media said. Xi described China and Vietnam as a "community with a shared future" despite long-standing territorial disputes.
- China said it is ready to work with Britain on mutual respect to strengthen economic and trade ties and improve the business environment. The comments come as both sides explore reviving high-level business dialogue ahead of PM Keir Starmer's planned Beijing visit.

Europe

- Finland plans a joint maritime surveillance centre with Baltic states and the EU to safeguard undersea cables and pipelines in the Gulf of Finland. The move comes amid heightened regional alert after repeated infrastructure damage since Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

Middle East

- Qatar will provide about \$434 million in support to Lebanon, with nearly \$400 million earmarked for the struggling energy sector, partly as grants. The aid will also support the Lebanese army and help address reconstruction needs after the 2024 conflict.
- Kuwait has awarded a 999.85 million dinar (\$3.3 billion) contract to a Chinese state-owned firm to build the country's largest sewage treatment plant. The project aims to significantly expand wastewater treatment capacity and upgrade national infrastructure.

Pakistan

- Pakistan's defence exports have seen a surge after its jets and weapons gained "combat-tested" status in last year's conflict with India, prompting talks with 13 countries. Interest spans JF-17 jets, drones and arms, though analysts caution geopolitical pressures may delay final deals.

United Kingdom

- UK finance minister Rachel Reeves will join Prime Minister Keir Starmer on his China visit next week, highlighting efforts to boost economic ties. The trip comes as Britain looks to strengthen links with China amid strained transatlantic relations.

United States

- The United States will send its largest-ever Winter Olympics contingent of 232 athletes to Milano Cortina, led by 98 veteran Olympians including Mikaela Shiffrin. The team aims to blend experience and youth at the Games starting next month.
- U.S. crude and natural gas output fell and power prices spiked as a severe winter storm swept across the country, forcing production shutdowns in key basins. The cold snap is expected to disrupt energy supplies further, raising outage risks and pressuring fuel markets through early next week.

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