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INDIA UPDATE

Highlights of this week

Andhra Pradesh

- YSR Kadapa district has become the district with the highest number of mandals in Andhra Pradesh at 40, following the latest state reorganisation, with Rajampet constituency now merged into Kadapa as per a gazette notification.
- Th government said electricity consumers will not face any true-up charge burden, as it will bear the ₹4,497.89 crore net true-up approved by Andhra Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission for FY20–FY24.

Delhi

- Delhi authorities intensified action under the Graded Response Action Plan, impounding 28 buses and penalising over 2,500 vehicles for PUC violations to curb pollution, Transport Minister Pankaj Kumar Singh said.
- Delhi government officials said the new district map—expanding districts from 11 to 13—will end jurisdictional confusion by aligning revenue, civic and departmental boundaries, ensuring residents deal with a single authority for all the services.
- The New Delhi Municipal Council has proposed revamping electricity and water supply networks, including new power panels and a water control room, to ensure uninterrupted services in its VIP areas.

Goa

- Goa has auctioned 12 mineral blocks, with five already operational and four set to start soon, while six more blocks will be auctioned next month, CM Pramod Sawant said. The move is part of efforts to revive mining while ensuring regulatory compliance.
- Air quality in Porvorim deteriorated to an AQI of 151 in the ‘unhealthy’ category, with pollution also affecting nearby Panaji, prompting rising concerns among residents over worsening air conditions.

Gujarat

- Ahmedabad Municipal Commissioner Banchhanidhi Pani criticised Bridge Department officials for poor planning, saying bridge closures worsened traffic congestion and caused avoidable inconvenience to the public.
- The Gujarat Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board has released a digital question bank and model papers for Classes 10 and 12, covering 40 subjects across streams and mediums, to ease board exam preparation.

Haryana

- The Haryana government has expanded the Lado Lakshmi Scheme by raising the income ceiling to ₹1.8 lakh and adding education- and nutrition-linked eligibility, Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini said.
- The government has approved eight flood control projects worth ₹6.47 crore on the Markanda River, Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini said, with officials directed to begin preparations immediately ahead of the monsoon.

Himachal Pradesh

- HP pharma industry is on edge as the revised Schedule M deadline ends, with many small and mid-sized units yet to comply with stricter quality norms set by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, raising fears of shutdowns across the state.
- The National Highways Authority of India has achieved a key milestone by connecting both ends of Tunnel No. 4 on the Shimla bypass, accelerating work on the Chandigarh–Shimla corridor and easing future traffic congestion.

Karnataka

- The Karnataka government has reshuffled the police department, transferring and promoting 68 IPS officers, including the posting of five new DCPs to Bengaluru, as part of a New Year administrative overhaul.
- The Karnataka Administrative Reforms Commission-2 has recommended redeploying surplus staff from low-workload units to frontline service roles to improve efficiency, with its 10th report submitted by chairman R V Deshpande to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

Upcoming News/Events

Andhra Pradesh

- The ‘Mee Intiki Mee Doctor’ project will be launched in Alluri Sitarama Raju district from February 2026 to deliver doorstep primary healthcare via mobile clinics, with support from REC Foundation and implementation by the Indian Red Cross Society.
- The Andhra Pradesh government will introduce supplementary exams for paramedical courses from the 2025–26 academic year to prevent students from losing an academic year, Health Minister Y Satya Kumar Yadav said.

Delhi

- Delhi’s Public Works Department will take over maintenance and security of the Signature Bridge, allocating ₹1.5 crore for round-the-clock guards and an armed gunman, after the tourism department cited lack of funds.
- NBCC plans a mixed-use project in Ghitorni after resolving a 57-year land dispute, securing a 21.23-acre share and paying ₹150 crore in premium and interest. The project could generate 4.45 lakh sq m of built-up area and around ₹8,500 crore in revenue.
- The Delhi government plans to resume its source apportionment study with a renewed focus on PM10, aiming to better identify dust and other pollution sources after earlier PM2.5 studies were halted, officials said.

Goa

- CM Pramod Sawant reviewed the state’s Emergency Response Support System (ERSS), directing officials to cut response times and strengthen ambulance, motorcycle units and first-responder training to deliver faster, citizen-centric emergency services across the state.
- Goa Fire and Emergency Services Director Nitin Raikar said no fresh fire NOCs have been issued to sealed clubs, stressing that reopening is barred without mandatory re-inspection amid an ongoing safety audit.

Gujarat

- The Ahmedabad Municipal Transport Service will roll out high-tech electric AC buses in January 2026, equipped with automatic fire control and cyber safety systems, with 15 buses already delivered and more to follow in phases.
- Residents of Ahmedabad are set to face traffic disruptions till 2027 as multiple flyover and bridge projects progress simultaneously at Asarwa, Sarangpur, Old Vadaj and Subhash Bridge, with works worth several hundred crore rupees underway or planned.

Haryana

- Villages in Rohtak district will get permanent relief from waterlogging as the Haryana government approved 29 flood protection schemes worth over ₹53 crore to improve drainage in affected rural and residential areas.
- The Haryana government has initiated the process to upgrade Kunjpura, Bajidpur and Nalvi Kalan into a Municipal Committee in Karnal, inviting public objections and suggestions before a final decision.

Himachal Pradesh

- Himachal Industries Minister Harshwardhan Chauhan said the HP General Industries Corporation will use its ₹13.37 crore profit to upgrade and modernise its manufacturing plants, with new machinery approved to boost production capacity.
- Heavy debt stress of over ₹1 lakh crore has left Himachal Pradesh reliant on central aid and favourable recommendations from the 16th Finance Commission, with the state needing major fiscal support to recover from disaster damage and rising liabilities.

Karnataka

- Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar outlined major infrastructure plans for Bengaluru, including new flyovers, tunnel roads and the Bengaluru Business Corridor, reaffirming the state’s commitment to a city makeover despite no central funding.
- Electricity bills in Karnataka will rise in 2026 through a uniform annual “top-up” or true-up, not a full tariff revision, Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission said, with the hike capped at about 8–10 paise per unit.



INDIA UPDATE

Highlights of this week

Madhya Pradesh

- Contaminated Narmada water in Indore has claimed 16 lives in Bhagirathpura, forcing residents to rely on tankers and borewells. Despite repairs, public confidence in the city's piped water supply remains severely shaken.

Mumbai

- Thackeray cousins Uddhav Thackeray and Raj Thackeray unveiled a joint manifesto for Mumbai, promising property tax waivers for flats up to 700 sq ft, ₹1,500 monthly aid for domestic workers, subsidised meals and affordable housing.
- The BMC has set up 10,231 polling stations across Mumbai for the civic elections, with Municipal Commissioner Bhushan Gagrani saying locations were finalised to ensure easy voter access across all 227 wards.
- Maharashtra's Directorate of Primary Education has identified 2,23,042 students from single-mother households in a first-ever statewide survey, highlighting the need for targeted educational support, with 26,777 students in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region.

Pune

- As PMC faces civic polls after nine years, its performance is under scrutiny, with voters weighing delayed infrastructure projects against persistent issues like traffic congestion, water supply disruptions and planning gaps in Pune.
- The Pune Municipal Corporation has issued property tax NOCs to 1,234 aspirants ahead of the January 15 civic polls, with many clearing dues via its amnesty scheme, which has helped collections cross ₹2,000 crore so far.
- After a two-month cold spell, Pune saw a sharp rise in minimum temperature to 13.5°C, nearly 3°C higher in 24 hours, according to the India Meteorological Department, due to multiple active weather systems disrupting cold northerly winds.

Punjab

- Cold conditions persist across Punjab and Chandigarh, though India Meteorological Department data shows minimum temperatures staying above normal at most places, with Mahendragarh (4°C) and Faridkot (5.5°C) the coldest.
- CM Bhagwant Mann urged expansion of international flights from Shaheed Bhagat Singh International Airport, Mohali, saying stronger global connectivity will boost jobs, trade, tourism and investment, reflecting robust Centre-state cooperation.

Rajasthan

- Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma directed officials to ensure timely preparations for the Army Day parade in Jaipur, calling it a matter of pride as it will be held outside a cantonment for the first time. He said the arrangements must reflect respect for the Indian Army and public faith in its sacrifice.

Tamil Nadu

- Tamil Nadu's T R B Rajaa said the defining feature of the state's 2025 investment cycle was its wide geographic spread, with over 270 MoUs worth ₹2.07 lakh crore signed and 4 lakh jobs created, extending industrial and IT growth well beyond Chennai.
- CM M K Stalin announced the Tamil Nadu Assured Pension Scheme, guaranteeing 50% of last drawn salary as pension, with the state fully funding it through a ₹13,000-crore one-time contribution and annual support.

Telangana

- The Telangana Assembly passed a resolution opposing the Centre's G RAM G Act, urging continuation of MGNREGA unchanged, with CM A Revanth Reddy saying the new law harms poor workers, women and federal principles.
- The Centre has set up a 13-member committee under the Central Water Commission to resolve Andhra Pradesh-Telangana water disputes, with equal state representation and members from the Krishna and Godavari river boards to ensure equitable water sharing.

Uttar Pradesh

- The Centre has increased the Indian Administrative Service cadre strength in Uttar Pradesh from 652 to 683, a move expected to ease senior-level administrative workload, with the change effective immediately.
- The UP Police Recruitment and Promotion Board has announced recruitment for 32,679 constable-level posts, with online applications open from December 31, 2025 to January 30, 2026, covering state police, PAC, UPSSF, jail warden and mounted police roles.

Upcoming News/Events

Madhya Pradesh

- Dense fog across MP delayed trains and kept day temperatures below 20°C in several cities, including Bhopal. The India Meteorological Department said a cold wave may persist for 15 days in January, with rain likely in Indore, Bhopal and Gwalior.

Mumbai

- The Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation will shift its head office to Dadar next week, clearing the way for Adani Realty to develop a prime 22-acre Bandra Reclamation land parcel in Mumbai, valued at about ₹30,000 crore.
- Ahead of the BMC polls, citizen groups across Mumbai have released charters demanding accountability on potholes, road quality, AQI, waste management and grievance redressal, signalling tougher scrutiny of future corporators.
- The Bombay High Court has restrained the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation from deploying subordinate court staff for election duty, directing the municipal commissioner to justify the move despite a standing court exemption.

Pune

- Pune International Airport will enforce a 12-minute vehicle waiting limit at its terminal, using Number Plate Recognition (NPR) cameras to penalise overstays, aiming to ease congestion amid nearly 15,000 daily vehicle movements.
- The government has handed over complete teacher recruitment responsibility to the State Examination Council, centralising exams and selection to improve transparency and efficiency, with oversight through a new steering committee via the Pavitra Portal.
- Indian Railways has begun installing 550 GMT high-capacity tracks on the Pune-Manmad route, enabling speeds up to 130 kmph and improved safety, with work between Puntamba-Kanhegaon completed swiftly using modern relaying technology.

Punjab

- The government has extended the one-time settlement scheme for pending tax dues till March 31, offering relief to traders and industry after stakeholder requests, Finance Minister Harpal Cheema said.
- Punjab will hold over 9,000 enrolment camps to roll out the Mukh Mantri Sehat Bima Yojana from January 15, offering ₹10 lakh annual cashless treatment per family, with United India Insurance Company managing claims, Health Minister Balbir Singh said.

Rajasthan

- The Rajasthan government has launched e-Swasthya Samvad, a digital platform to strengthen governance and coordination in medical education through regular video interactions. Launched under Bhajanlal Sharma, it will be held twice weekly to enable faster decisions and effective health programme implementation.

Tamil Nadu

- The Coimbatore City Municipal Corporation is fast-tracking the Ukkadam twin bus terminus using pre-assembled steel structures and aims to complete and open the ₹21.55-crore project by February-March 2026.
- Tiruchy's Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Government Hospital will shift its TAEI trauma care unit to a new multi-speciality block to improve access and emergency care, with M K Stalin likely to inaugurate the facility by end-January.

Telangana

- CM A Revanth Reddy said the Phase-I DPR for the 21-km Musi Riverfront project will be ready within weeks, with tenders to follow by March, backed by in-principle approval of ₹4,100 crore funding from Asian Development Bank.
- Telangana will introduce a Karnataka-style hate speech law in the Budget session, with Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy saying it will penalise derogatory remarks against any religion to protect communal harmony.

Uttar Pradesh

- CM Yogi Adityanath has directed all departments in the state to fast-track budget utilisation in 2025-26, fixing officer-level accountability to avoid delays and ensure timely completion of public projects.
- Uttar Pradesh plans to develop eight data centre parks with a combined capacity of 900 MW under its Data Centre Policy, scaling up targets after early success to boost digital infrastructure and investment.



GLOBAL UPDATE

Highlights of this week

Africa

- Nigeria’s military has urged civilians in Nigeria to avoid debris and unexploded ordnance after U.S.-backed airstrikes on Islamic State-linked camps in Sokoto, warning of deadly risks. The advisory follows reports of locals scavenging strike sites hit by United States MQ-9 drone strikes.
- Islamic State-linked Allied Democratic Forces killed at least 15 people in three villages in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, including civilians and soldiers, officials said. The attacks in Lubero highlight persistent violence despite ongoing Congolese and Ugandan military operations.

America

- Pedro Sanchez said Spain will not recognise a United States intervention in Venezuela that breaches international law, even after U.S. forces captured President Nicolas Maduro, warning such action risks regional instability following remarks by Donald Trump.

Asia Pacific

- North Korea fired at least two ballistic missiles toward the East Sea, denouncing U.S. action in Venezuela and signalling deterrence as South Korea President Lee Jae Myung began a state visit to China, a move analysts say was aimed at sending strategic messages to both Beijing and Washington.
- Thailand released 18 Cambodian soldiers under a renewed ceasefire with Cambodia, easing tensions after nearly three weeks of deadly border clashes, as Thailand said the detainees were held in line with international humanitarian law.

China

- Taiwan President Lai Ching-te says Taiwan is determined to defend its sovereignty and boost defence spending after China conducted fresh military drills near the island, warning that 2026 will be a critical year for national security.
- The Philippine Coast Guard deployed an aircraft to challenge a Chinese research vessel detected within the Philippines’ EEZ off Cagayan, citing possible violations of maritime laws amid rising Taiwan-related tensions.

Europe

- Russia said negotiations with the United States on ending the Ukraine conflict are showing slow but steady progress. It accused some Western European powers of attempting to derail the talks and urged Washington to counter such efforts.

Middle East

- Yemen’s southern separatists welcomed Saudi Arabia’s call for dialogue to defuse recent fighting, signalling a possible easing of tensions between Riyadh and the UAE. The move comes as Saudi-backed government forces regain territory seized by the UAE-backed Southern Transitional Council.
- UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres condemned Israel’s move to block electricity and water to UNRWA facilities, warning it would seriously hinder the agency’s operations and violate UN protections.

Pakistan

- Pakistan’s consumer inflation eased to 5.6% y-o-y in December, driven by falling food prices, after the State Bank of Pakistan surprised markets with a rate cut to 10.5%, though it warned core inflation remains sticky and the International Monetary Fund cautioned against premature easing.

United Kingdom

- Britain’s factory sector expanded at its fastest pace in 15 months in December, with manufacturing PMI rising to 50.6, but confidence slipped as growth remained modest and outlook concerns persisted despite relief over Rachel Reeves’ budget.
- Britain recorded its hottest and sunniest year on record in 2025, with the Met Office saying average temperatures hit 10.09°C—surpassing 2022—underscoring accelerating climate change driven by persistent high pressure and warmer seas.

United States

- State-owned investors channelled \$132 billion into the United States in 2025—nearly half their total investments—driven by bets on AI and digital infrastructure, while flows to emerging markets such as China, India and Indonesia fell 28%, hitting a multi-year low.
- President Donald Trump blocked photonics firm HieFo Corp from acquiring assets of Emcore, citing national security risks and China-linked ownership concerns flagged by Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States.

Upcoming News/Events

Africa

- Ethiopia has reached a draft agreement with bondholders on restructuring its \$1 billion 2024 international bond, marking a key step toward resolving its debt crisis. Talks are ongoing to finalise non-financial terms before issuing new replacement bonds.
- Somalia will host its first deepwater offshore exploration in February, with Turkey deploying a drilling vessel under a 2024 energy cooperation deal, marking a key step in developing Somalia’s offshore energy potential.

America

- The United Nations Security Council will meet Monday, 5th Jan after the United States deposed Nicolas Maduro, a move Antonio Guterres called a “dangerous precedent,” as Donald Trump says Washington will run Venezuela until a “safe” transition.
- Colombia will raise its 2026 minimum wage by 22.7% to 1.75 million pesos (\$470), Gustavo Petro said, aiming to reduce inequality, though economists warn the sharp hike could fuel inflation and strain jobs.

Asia Pacific

- Myanmar will release 6,186 prisoners, including 52 foreigners, in an Independence Day amnesty, with sentences reduced nationwide, though it remains unclear if political detainees will be freed amid ongoing unrest since the 2021 coup.

China

- China Aircraft Leasing Group said its unit CALC will acquire 30 Airbus A320neo aircraft, with deliveries scheduled in phases through 2033. The company did not disclose the financial details of the deal.
- Irish Prime Minister Micheál Martin will visit China, the first such trip since 2012—meeting President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang as Beijing seeks to strengthen ties with individual European Union members.

Europe

- Germany called for de-escalation and a political solution in Venezuela after the U.S. action against Nicolas Maduro, stressing that international law must be respected and Venezuelans deserve a peaceful, democratic future.

Middle East

- Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said he will speak with Donald Trump on Monday, Jan 5th to discuss Ukraine-Russia peace efforts and the Gaza situation, while Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan will attend a Ukraine-backing “Coalition of the Willing” meeting in Paris.
- Saudi Arabia’s National Debt Management Center has finalised a \$13 billion, seven-year syndicated loan to fund power, water and public utilities projects, aligning with its medium-term debt strategy and Vision 2030 infrastructure push.

Pakistan

- Traders across Pakistan have warned of a nationwide shutdown on January 16 if the government does not withdraw mandatory POS machine installation, saying it will burden small businesses and enable harassment by tax officials.

United Kingdom

- Argentine President Javier Milei is set to visit the United Kingdom in April–May, with reports suggesting discussions may include easing restrictions linked to the Falkland Islands dispute, though no official agenda has been disclosed.
- Britain’s Octopus Energy will spin off its technology arm Kraken as an independent firm valued at \$8.65 billion after a funding round led by D1 Capital Partners, paving the way for a potential IPO while Octopus retains a 13.7% stake.

United States

- President Donald Trump said Washington will temporarily administer Venezuela after U.S. forces captured President Nicolas Maduro and flew him to New York to face drug-trafficking charges, pledging a “safe and proper” transition while U.S. oil firms move in to revive the sector.
- The U.S. Justice Department says it still has 5.2 million pages of Jeffrey Epstein files to review, deploying 400 lawyers through late January, likely delaying public release beyond Congress’s December 19 deadline despite an order from the Trump administration.

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