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INDIA UPDATE

Highlights of this week

Andhra Pradesh

- CM N. Chandrababu Naidu, reaffirmed support to bereaved power sector families as Energy Minister Gottipati Ravikumar issued compassionate appointment letters to 27 beneficiaries, taking the total to nearly 500 such appointments.
- The Andhra Pradesh government has approved 100% gross salary for 1,560 contract employees in the Health Department appointed under specific 2001-02 orders, restoring benefits curtailed under later pay structures, effective from September 14, 2023.

Delhi

- CM Rekha Gupta inaugurated a new power sub-station near Central Vista to ensure uninterrupted electricity for key Delhi Metro corridors, including the Airport and Violet Lines, while supporting future network expansion.
- Delhi's excise department has invited applications for wholesale country liquor licences for 2026-27, valid from April 1, 2026, to March 31, 2027. No wholesaler will control over 33% supply, with around 300 lakh litres to be supplied to government vends.
- Delhi water minister Parvesh Verma said the government extended the water bill LPSC waiver scheme till August 15, calling it the final extension after a strong public response. Over 3.3 lakh consumers have benefited, with ₹1,500 crore in penalties waived and ₹430 crore in dues recovered.

Goa

- Mormugao launched its first animal ambulance to provide rapid rescue and medical transport for injured street animals. The service, already aiding dozens of strays, strengthens local animal welfare response.
- The government announced a One-Time Scheme to waive penal interest on interest-free education loans, benefiting about 1,402 defaulters with ₹21.3 crore in dues. Effective February 1 to July 31, 2026, borrowers must pay principal and regular interest.

Gujarat

- Over 1,200 Ahmedabad residents were trained under a free ISA outreach programme in basic emergency response, including hands-only CPR, choking management and early heart attack care, to improve first-response readiness before medical help arrives.
- Indian Railways has launched the country's first LNG-diesel dual-fuel DEMU train in Ahmedabad, replacing about 40% diesel with cleaner LNG to cut emissions and fuel costs, after successful trials and now running in regular passenger service.

Haryana

- CM Nayab Singh Saini said the state is pursuing 'Viksit Bharat-Viksit Haryana' by 2047 through welfare measures like free dialysis and 24-hour power, while asserting steady progress on commitments and criticising opposition-led states for poor delivery.
- CM Nayab Singh Saini said the 2026-27 Budget will focus on welfare of all sections, prioritising public expectations, efficient governance, technology use and effective implementation of schemes through stakeholder consultations.

Himachal Pradesh

- Pangi subdivision in Chamba district is on high avalanche alert after continuous heavy snowfall, prompting authorities to advise residents to avoid avalanche-prone and high-risk areas, with locals demanding emergency helicopter services for safety and connectivity.
- Hamirpur DC Gandharva Rathore launched a ₹2,063-crore NABARD-prepared credit roadmap for 2026-27, earmarking major funding for agriculture, MSMEs and social infrastructure to boost priority-sector lending and sustainable district growth.

Karnataka

- Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy has banned all direct and indirect tobacco advertisements on state-run buses and bus stations, directing officials to remove existing ads within a set deadline in the interest of public health.
- Karnataka is banking on the Union Budget to secure around ₹3,000 crore in pending 15th Finance Commission funds, which risk lapsing if panchayat and urban local body elections are not held before March 31, 2026.

Upcoming News/Events

Andhra Pradesh

- Vizianagaram district has sought ₹3,900 crore under the Centre's Purvodaya scheme to revive stalled irrigation projects and complete Uttarandhra Sujala Sravanthi, aiming to irrigate 3.94 lakh acres and reduce farmers' reliance on monsoons.
- Agriculture Minister Kinjarapu Atchannaidu said Andhra Pradesh aims to emerge as a global cocoa and horticulture hub, as the State-Level Cocoa Conclave-2026 focuses on boosting cultivation, quality, processing and market access.

Delhi

- Gurugram authorities are identifying accident-prone stretches and stepping up safety measures and enforcement at major hotspots to reduce road fatalities. Hit-and-run compensation is also being expedited, with cases processed through the GIC portal.
- CM Rekha Gupta announced a ₹500 crore grant to the MCD to improve sanitation and control dust pollution. The funds will be used for sanitation works, minor road repairs, waste clearance, and settling dues of waste management agencies.
- The Trans-Yamuna Area Development Board approved ₹728 crore worth of projects to upgrade roads, drainage and public amenities, with a focus on monsoon preparedness. CM Rekha Gupta directed agencies to prioritise road repairs, waterlogging hotspots and commuter safety, assuring full funding support.

Goa

- Goa will install AI-based traffic signals with smart cameras at 92 locations to automatically detect violations like triple riding and lane indiscipline. The initiative aims to strengthen round-the-clock, unbiased road safety enforcement across the state.
- Goa will roll out an e-Zero-FIR system for cyber fraud cases up to ₹1 lakh, allowing instant complaint registration via the 1930 helpline without visiting police stations. The move aims to enable faster action, improve cybercrime response, and strengthen tech-driven policing.

Gujarat

- AMTS has presented a ₹991 crore budget for 2026-27, proposing ₹600 crore in fresh borrowing even as its debt has climbed to ₹5,092 crore, while planning fleet expansion, induction of electric buses and a full shift to EVs by 2030 despite mounting financial stress.
- The Gujarat Cabinet has approved a ₹2,630 crore project to widen the 51.6-km Ahmedabad-Mehsana highway into an eight-lane corridor, aiming to ease congestion and improve connectivity for commuters across north Gujarat districts.

Haryana

- Haryana will add over 400 electric buses to its fleet and mandate driving tests for private bus drivers, while digitising bus operations with tracking systems, apps and display boards to improve safety, transparency and passenger convenience.
- Haryana aims to eliminate anaemia and strengthen cancer care by expanding screenings, free treatment support and infrastructure, alongside a 275% rise in the health budget and large-scale recruitment of doctors, with free medicines and dialysis across govt. hospitals.

Himachal Pradesh

- The government is setting up a state-of-the-art Cancer Care Centre at Dr RKGMC, Hamirpur, with 11 specialised departments to provide comprehensive oncology treatment and advanced care for cancer patients.
- The Shimla Municipal Corporation has sought the Centre's approval to include Shimla (Urban) under PMGSY and other schemes, citing exclusion due to its urban status despite rising population, tourist pressure and mounting road and infrastructure challenges.

Karnataka

- The Karnataka government is considering a ban on social media use for children below 16, citing global precedents and rising concerns over digital addiction, while expanding its ongoing digital detox and responsible online use programmes.
- Karnataka and the Centre are at loggerheads over implementing the Kasturirangan report on Western Ghats conservation, with the state government formally rejecting it despite MoEFCC efforts to find a middle path.

INDIA UPDATE

Highlights of this week

Madhya Pradesh

- Hundreds of displaced fishermen in Barwani held a boat rally with 30 boats under the Narmada Bachao Andolan, led by activist Medha Patkar, pressing the government to address 10 long-pending rights-related demands.

Mumbai

- Sunetra Pawar became Maharashtra's first woman deputy chief minister after being elected leader of the NCP legislature party following Ajit Pawar's demise. She was sworn in at a low-key ceremony after senior party leaders conveyed the decision to the chief minister.
- Residents of Haji Noorani Chawl, Elphinstone Road, alleged that MMRDA reneged on its promise of in-situ rehabilitation by allotting homes in distant suburbs and sought inclusion in a nearby cluster redevelopment linked to the Sewri–Worli Elevated Corridor.
- Central Railway began an 85-day mega block at CSMT from Feb 1 for redevelopment work on platforms 16 & 17, suspending operations there till April 26 and causing several long-distance trains to terminate at Dadar or Thane, while suburban services remain unaffected.

Pune

- Pune emerged as Maharashtra's worst-hit region for extra-pulmonary tuberculosis in 2025, with the highest district and civic body case counts, even as overall TB cases declined statewide, indicating a growing shift towards EPTB.
- The CPI(M)–AIKS foot march by farmers, labourers and fisherfolk ended after the Maharashtra government gave written assurances to implement key demands, following meetings with senior ministers and Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis.
- The Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation replaced the two-bin system with four-way waste segregation, requiring households to separate wet, dry, domestic hazardous and sanitary waste as part of a citywide drive to improve scientific waste management.

Punjab

- Ludhiana's long-awaited Halwara airport was inaugurated virtually by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, with commercial flight operations set to begin in March, marking a major boost to the city's air connectivity.
- The Punjab government released ₹458 crore in pending post-matric scholarship dues from 2017–20 to revive around 900 financially stressed colleges, with over 10 lakh students benefiting under the scheme during the AAP government's tenure.

Rajasthan

- CM Bhajanlal Sharma said the state is creating 1.44 lakh government jobs, with a recruitment calendar for 1 lakh posts released, and announced that PM Narendra Modi will soon distribute appointment letters to 21,000 youths.

Tamil Nadu

- Secondary grade teachers in Chennai called off their 37-day protest after the school education minister assured that their pay parity demand would be addressed once a three-member committee submits its report, urging them to resume duties in students' interest.
- CM MK Stalin urged PM Narendra Modi and Governor RN Ravi to read the Union government's Economic Survey, saying it praised TN's growth, jobs and entrepreneurship, while he criticised the Centre for weakening rural employment by replacing MGNREGA.

Telangana

- The 16th Finance Commission raised Telangana's Central tax share to 2.174% for 2026–31, noting it has the highest per capita income among large states, even as its debt-to-GSDP ratio rose sharply before easing and fiscal deficits stayed above 3% in most years.
- The government released ₹720 crore in to clear pending dues of government employees, including gratuity, GPF, surrender leave encashment and advances, with the entire backlog until February 2025 settled and monthly releases continuing under a green-channel system.

Uttar Pradesh

- The Union Budget 2026–27 proposed developing Sarnath and Hastinapur among 15 sites as experiential cultural destinations, with curated walkways, immersive storytelling and modern amenities to enhance tourism while preserving heritage.
- Uttar Pradesh's allocation in the Union Budget 2026–27 rose by about ₹34,000 crore to ₹4.26 lakh crore, driven by higher tax devolution and centrally sponsored schemes, keeping the state on a strong growth trajectory.

Upcoming News/Events

Madhya Pradesh

- Madhya Pradesh is set to receive about ₹7,500 crore less annually in central tax devolution over the next five years, with an additional shortfall of ₹2,314 crore in the current fiscal year ending March 2026.

Mumbai

- Full-scale construction of the ₹22,000-crore Versova–Bhayandar Coastal Road will begin after the BMC received mangrove cell approval, following earlier Bombay HC clearance, despite the removal of over 45,000 mangroves along the alignment.
- Mumbai will get its first anaerobic microbial inoculum plant at the Lower Parel railway workshop to support odour-free bio-toilets in trains, with the DRDO-developed facility scheduled to start construction in July and produce up to 3 lakh litres of bacteria daily.
- MHADA began internal preparations for a housing lottery of nearly 5,000 homes across Mumbai, with around 2,400–2,500 units from the Patra Chawl redevelopment in Goregaon West, and the draw is likely to be held by April–May after applications remains open.

Pune

- The Pune Municipal Corporation approved its first-ever free HPV vaccination drive for girls aged 9–14 to prevent cervical cancer, with vaccines funded through CSR support and immunisation facilitated by the Jivika Foundation.
- Indian Railways plans an airport-style holding area at Pune Railway Station to regulate unreserved passenger movement, reduce platform crowding and enhance safety, with construction slated to finish within six months.
- The Pune Municipal Corporation will add 52 more private hospitals to its disease surveillance network, taking the total to 153, to improve early detection and monitoring of infectious diseases across the city.

Punjab

- PRTC announced the induction of 663 new buses, including 309 large buses, under the kilometre scheme to strengthen public transport, with hopes pinned on the Union Budget for release of pending central dues and relief funds.
- South Korea agreed to provide technical support to Punjab's agriculture sector after a Korean delegation held talks in Chandigarh on smart farming, advanced agri-machinery and biotechnology following CM Bhagwant Mann's visit.

Rajasthan

- Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate Jaisalmer Railway Station, adding that Rajasthan has received ₹10,000 crore in the Railway Budget 2026–27, a massive increase compared to allocations during the Congress regime.

Tamil Nadu

- Tamil Nadu is set to anchor India's rare earth push as IREL plans to expand mining and set up a monazite processing plant, boosting self-reliance in critical minerals while supporting EVs, renewables, manufacturing and job creation.
- In a first, the Madras High Court decided to use an AI tool, "Superlaw Courts", to scan and organise case documents in an arbitration matter to speed up hearings, while clarifying it will only retrieve and summarise records without influencing judicial reasoning.

Telangana

- CM Revanth Reddy urges students and alumni of Harvard, MIT and Columbia to act as global ambassadors for "Telangana Rising," seeking their expertise to support the state's development, as participants expressed willingness to contribute to long-term growth vision.
- The GHMC Council, in its final meeting, approved a ₹11,460 crore budget for 2026–27 covering GHMC and 27 merged ULBs, prioritising roads, flyovers and drainage works, amid sharp exchanges between Congress and BRS corporators over past governance.

Uttar Pradesh

- The state will get two of India's seven proposed high-speed rail corridors—Delhi–Varanasi and Varanasi–Siliguri—cutting travel times sharply and boosting pilgrimage tourism, business travel and regional connectivity, the railway minister said.
- The government announced plans to build seven grand entrance gates on major routes into Lucknow, each themed around spiritual and historical heritage, with designs rooted in traditional Indian architecture to showcase the state's cultural identity.

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

- Britain's state-owned investor Gridworks signed about \$400 million in power transmission deals in Ethiopia during the UK foreign minister's visit, marking the country's first transmission PPPs and supporting renewable energy expansion and regional grid links.
- Tunisian President Kais Saied extended the country's long-running state of emergency by 11 months until December 31, continuing measures in place since 2015 following a deadly attack on presidential guards.

America

- Argentina bought \$808 million in Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) from the U.S. Treasury to meet an interest payment to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), local newspaper La Nacion reported on Sunday February 1.
- Venezuela's interim president Delcy Rodríguez announced a proposed amnesty law that could free hundreds of prisoners, especially political detainees, and pledged to convert the notorious Helicoide detention centre in Caracas into a sports and social services hub to help heal divisions.

Asia Pacific

- Kyrgyzstan is seeking talks with the EU after reports that the bloc may invoke its anti-sanctions circumvention tool, with Deputy PM Daniyar Amangeldiev set to discuss the issue with the EU's sanctions chief amid concerns over alleged sanctions evasion linked to Russia.
- The death toll from a landslide in West Java has risen to 49, Indonesia's main rescue agency says, nearly a week after the incident. Search and rescue operations continue as authorities report that 15 people are still missing.

China

- China's Southern Theater Command says it carried out coordinated naval and air patrols around Scarborough Shoal on Saturday. The move underscores Beijing's continued military presence in the contested South China Sea.
- China has rolled out measures to shore up its indebted property sector, which has been under strain since mid-2021. The prolonged debt crisis has led to widespread developer defaults and weighed on economic growth.

Europe

- The European Court of Auditors says the EU's push to diversify critical metals and minerals imports has yet to deliver tangible results. Despite the 2024 Critical Raw Materials Act, the bloc remains heavily reliant on suppliers such as China, Turkey, and Chile.

Middle East

- Syrian government forces have entered the Kurdish-controlled city of Hasakah as part of a U.S.-backed ceasefire aimed at integrating Kurdish-run regions with Damascus. The move seeks to avert further clashes between President's government and the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces.
- Saudi Arabia's economy grew 4.9% year-on-year in Q4, driven by a sharp rebound in oil output and solid non-oil activity. For full-year 2025, real GDP expanded 4.5%, with oil growth at 5.6% and non-oil sectors up 4.9%.

Pakistan

- Pakistani security forces killed 145 militants after a 40-hour operation following coordinated gun and bomb attacks across Balochistan that left nearly 50 people dead, including civilians and security personnel. The banned BLA claimed responsibility, marking one of the deadliest militant flare-ups.

United Kingdom

- Resident doctors in England have renewed their mandate for industrial action for another six months, the British Medical Association says, allowing further strikes. Health minister Wes Streeting has vowed to prevent disruption, as the union cites pay erosion and staff shortages.
- Britain has imposed wide-ranging sanctions on Iranian officials and a state security body over alleged violent crackdowns on peaceful protests. The measures target serious human rights violations, including suppression of free expression, limits on assembly, and breaches of the right to life.

United States

- The U.S. House is set to take up a deal to restore government funding, with a vote expected on Tuesday. Funding for agencies including the Pentagon and the Department of Transportation lapsed amid a dispute over immigration enforcement.

Upcoming News/Events**Africa**

- A key bondholder group in Ethiopia plans legal action after bilateral creditors blocked a \$1 billion debt restructuring deal for breaching G20 rules, forcing the government to reopen negotiations despite improved IMF projections.
- Dangote Group firms signed new gas supply deals with NNPC units to support expansion, aligning with Nigeria's Gas Master Plan 2026, which targets higher output, cleaner energy use, and over \$60 billion in gas-sector investments by 2030.

America

- Laura Fernandez will become Costa Rica's next president, pledging to continue a populist agenda that includes constitutional reforms and temporary suspension of civil liberties to combat rising drug-related violence.
- Mexico said it will pursue diplomatic solutions to avoid U.S. tariffs after Washington imposed penalties on countries supplying oil to Cuba, with President Claudia Sheinbaum stressing efforts to both protect Mexican interests and continue supporting the island.

Asia Pacific

- Singapore will launch a national space agency on April 1 to tap into the rapidly expanding global space economy. The move aims to better harness growing investment, innovation, and commercial opportunities in the space sector.
- The Philippine economy is expected to rebound in 2026 with growth of at least 5%, according to the finance minister. The outlook is supported by strong economic fundamentals and steady performance across key revenue-generating sectors.

China

- Alibaba plans to spend 3 billion yuan (\$431 million) to promote its Qwen AI app during the Lunar New Year. The move intensifies competition among China's top tech firms in the fast-heating chatbot race.
- China will lift travel restrictions on a group of UK lawmakers, Prime Minister Keir Starmer says, allowing them to travel to the country. The move signals a modest easing of tensions between Beijing and London.

Europe

- France is expected to pass its 2026 budget on Monday as two no-confidence motions are set to fail. The move brings temporary stability to Prime Minister Sebastien Lecornu's fragile minority government after months of political deadlock.
- Greece's prime minister has proposed reviewing ministers' legal immunity and ending "jobs for life" in the state sector to restore public trust. The move follows a graft scandal and aims to build support ahead of the 2027 national election.

Middle East

- Iran and the United States will resume nuclear talks in Istanbul, with regional participation including Saudi Arabia and Egypt, officials say. U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff and Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi aim to revive diplomacy amid heightened regional tensions.

Pakistan

- Pakistan has approved its team's participation in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 but will boycott the February 15 group match against India in Colombo, the government says. The ICC has criticised the decision, calling it not in the interest of cricket.

United Kingdom

- UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer says Britain will consider applying to join a new EU SAFE defence fund as it seeks closer defence ties with the bloc. The move comes ahead of talks with EU counterparts this week on joint defence projects.

United States

- U.S. President Donald Trump plans to launch "Project Vault," a \$12 billion strategic critical minerals stockpile backed by a \$10 billion loan from the U.S. Export-Import Bank. The move aims to counter China's influence over key minerals vital for electric vehicles, technology, and defense manufacturing.
- U.S. President Donald Trump's senior envoy Steve Witkoff is expected to visit Israel for talks with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and senior military officials. The visit comes amid heightened tensions with Iran and renewed U.S. efforts to end the Gaza war.

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