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INDIA UPDATE

Highlights of this week

Andhra Pradesh

- APCRDA has launched a public survey under its 'Vision 2047' plan to gather citizen feedback for shaping Amaravati into a sustainable, world-class capital region, with responses open in English and Telugu till November 30.
- International Fleet Review 2026 in Visakhapatnam sees President Droupadi Murmu review 71 Indian and foreign naval ships in a display of maritime strength and coordination. The event marks the 13th Fleet Review and underscores global naval cooperation.

Delhi

- CM Rekha Gupta inaugurates and lays the foundation for Delhi Jal Board projects worth ₹2,100 crore to upgrade sewage plants and strengthen water and sewer infrastructure across Delhi.
- National Zoological Park secures ₹400 crore approval for a phased four-year modernisation to upgrade animal habitats, add a knowledge centre, and improve visitor access and facilities.
- The Delhi government mandates online ration card applications by the eldest female head of household under the Delhi Food Security Rules, 2026, with eligibility capped at ₹1.2 lakh annual income and required Aadhaar and residence documents.

Goa

- The Cuncolim Municipal Council unanimously opposes the proposed Marine Impex fish mill factory, citing concerns over environmental damage, foul odour, and public health risks. The council resolves to formally communicate its objection and refuses to support the project within its jurisdiction.

Gujarat

- Ahmedabad unveils the 350-acre Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Sports Enclave beside the Sabarmati River, anchored by the Narendra Modi Stadium, to host global events and boost sports infrastructure, tourism, and jobs.
- Gujarat unveils a record ₹4.08 lakh crore Budget for 2026–27, prioritising tourism, AI-led governance, and sports infrastructure to prepare Ahmedabad as an "Olympic Ready City" for the 2030 Commonwealth Games.

Haryana

- The Centre approves ₹1,464 crore for a six-lane greenfield spur in Punjab to improve connectivity to Shimla and decongest the Chandigarh Tricity region. The project will link NH-205A with the Zirakpur Bypass as part of the proposed Tricity Ring Road.
- Construction of a new ₹65 crore bus stand begins in Rewari, spread over 20 acres and expected to be completed within two years. The modern facility aims to ease traffic congestion and enhance regional transport infrastructure.

Himachal Pradesh

- State merges 38 boys' and girls' schools and converts 21 others into co-educational institutions to improve enrolment and resource use. The government plans to convert the remaining 40 single-gender senior secondary schools into co-ed schools as well.
- Himachal Pradesh forms a Cabinet sub-panel to frame new lottery rules ahead of an April rollout, targeting ₹100 crore in annual revenue amid rising fiscal stress. The move aims to modernise regulations and generate funds as the state's debt crosses ₹1 lakh crore.

Karnataka

- India and France sign an MoU between Bharat Electronics Limited and Safran Electronics to jointly manufacture Hammer missiles in Bengaluru, deepening defence co-production ties. The pact was formalised during the India-France Defence Dialogue co-chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his French counterpart.
- US Ambassador Sergio Gor meets Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah to discuss AI, emerging tech, and deepening India-US ties, noting that over 700 American firms operate in the state. The talks highlight Bengaluru's growing role in technology and bilateral cooperation.

Upcoming News/Events

Andhra Pradesh

- Tourism Minister Kandula Durgesh calls for intensified tourism promotion in Andhra Pradesh, stronger digital outreach, and better preparations for ITB Berlin 2026 to boost visitor numbers and revenue.
- CM N Chandrababu Naidu clears 27 projects worth ₹29,021 crore in Andhra Pradesh, expected to create over 22,000 jobs, while stressing faster approvals, strict land monitoring, and stronger push for mega and tourism investments.

Delhi

- Delhi Jal Board plans to geo-tag consumer properties and assign unique Customer Premise IDs to streamline billing operations. The move aims to improve billing accuracy, service transparency, and revenue efficiency for its 29 lakh consumers.
- Delhi Metro Rail Corporation will replace 33kV copper cables with aluminium across 175 km of its network at a cost of ₹32.59 crore to curb repeated thefts. The move aims to prevent power and signalling disruptions that have caused delays across key corridors.
- The Delhi government constitutes a high-level panel to draft a comprehensive drone policy, reviewing models from states like Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat to strengthen regulation, innovation, and security oversight.

Goa

- The Inspector General of Societies (South Goa) cancels the 2022 Executive Council polls of the United Tribals Associations Alliance (UTAA), citing irregularities. A government-appointed administrator will conduct fresh elections within 90 days with 30 days' notice to all eight founding bodies.

Gujarat

- AMC will seal single-use plastic manufacturing units for 15 days and retail shops holding over 100 kg of banned plastic for 10 days, following High Court directions. The move enforces strict penalties and fines to curb production and use of prohibited plastic.
- The Union Home Minister launches 'Bharat Taxi', India's first cooperative-led ride-hailing platform, after a two-month pilot phase. The service begins in Delhi-NCR and Gujarat and will expand nationwide over the next two to three years.

Haryana

- Haryana begins preparations for India's first fully digital Census in 2027, with a house listing phase scheduled from May 1–30, 2026. Citizens will have the option of online self-enumeration, receiving a unique ID for verification by field enumerators.
- Narnaul will get a six-lane bypass as land acquisition begins, with officials reviewing progress of the extension project. Authorities say the bypass will ease traffic congestion and boost regional connectivity by linking key infrastructures.

Himachal Pradesh

- HP's entry tax hike from April 1, 2026, raises charges for local and out-of-state vehicles, triggering outrage in Punjab border areas. Critics say the sharp increase, especially for non-local and commercial vehicles, will heavily burden daily commuters and businesses.
- The Himachal Pradesh Budget Session will resume on March 18, with Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu expected to present the 2026–27 Budget, amid ongoing political sparring over the Revenue Deficit Grant.

Karnataka

- Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre seeks 1% of the estimated ₹4.5 lakh crore state budget—around ₹4,500 crore—for forests and environment to boost green cover and address man-animal conflict. He says funds are needed for administration, conflict mitigation, and relocation of forest dwellers.
- The 'Made in India' Airbus H125 helicopters will roll out from the Tata-Airbus facility in Kolar from 2027, marking India's first private-sector helicopter assembly line. The project is expected to boost defence manufacturing, exports, and India's position as in South Asia.

INDIA UPDATE

Highlights of this week

Madhya Pradesh

- Bhopal's Central Vista/State Capital Complex project, modelled on Delhi's Central Vista, has received preliminary approval, with 59 offices seeking over 1 lakh sq m of space. The Housing Board has been given four months to submit the Detailed Project Report by June 30.

Mumbai

- The government relaxes promotion norms under the Career Advancement Scheme for faculty in technical institutes, easing qualification and training requirements. The move allows retroactive benefits and waives the mandatory PhD condition for certain lecturers.
- The revised contract value for Metro 4 works executed by a subcontractor is about 75% higher than the original 2018 bid, with overall project costs likely to nearly double by 2026. The escalation comes amid scrutiny following a recent slab collapse incident on the corridor.
- The government sets up a committee under the Konkan Divisional Commissioner to draft a revised gymkhana policy for facilities on government land. The move aims to ensure public access, greater transparency in memberships, and improved revenue for the state.

Pune

- Twenty-eight Pune Zilla Parishad schools secure an A+ grade in the SQAAP evaluation conducted by SCERT. The framework assesses school quality across Maharashtra through self-evaluation and external review mechanisms.
- Pune RTO launches an inspection drive covering 340 authorised driving schools, grading them A to D based on facilities, training quality, and compliance. Officials will also review complaints, student pass rates, and overall service standards.
- Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation holds a review meeting with state agencies to address complaints of contaminated and low-pressure water supply. The civic body says coordinated measures are underway to ensure clean and potable water for residents.

Punjab

- Punjab draws over ₹5,400 crore in steel sector investments in a year, with major firms expanding in Mandi Gobindgarh and Ludhiana amid rising demand for specialty and green steel.
- Residents along the Punjab-Himachal border protest the hike in Himachal's entry tax on out-of-state cars from ₹70 to ₹170. Daily commuters and traders say the sharp increase will significantly burden cross-border travel for work and essential services.

Rajasthan

- Rajasthan publishes its final electoral roll after the Special Intensive Revision, listing 5.15 crore registered voters across 199 Assembly constituencies. Officials say 31.36 lakh names were removed during the exercise, with a net increase of over 10.48 lakh voters from the draft roll.

Tamil Nadu

- CM M K Stalin unveils ₹1,800 crore worth infrastructure and IT projects in Madurai, including a ₹1,536 crore drinking water scheme benefiting over 10 lakh people. The initiatives also feature new IT investments and job creations.
- Tamil Nadu records a ₹14,355 crore shortfall in its 2025-26 own tax revenue target, attributing the gap largely to GST impacts, and plans to boost compliance and administration to improve collections.

Telangana

- Farmers in Telangana report difficulties with the app-based urea booking system, citing lack of smartphones and digital literacy, prompting protests for restoration of manual distribution. Officials maintain there is no fertiliser shortage and are reviewing measures.
- Seventy-six trained canines and 105 handlers pass out from the Integrated Intelligence Training Academy, Moinabad, to boost crime detection and intelligence capabilities across Telangana Police, Bihar CID, and CISF.

Uttar Pradesh

- Dy CM Keshav Prasad Maurya visits Frankfurt to attract global investment, showcasing the state's policies and infrastructure through Invest UP. The delegation aims to boost sectors like manufacturing, renewable energy, and IT.
- CM Yogi Adityanath disburses ₹285 crore crop insurance compensation to 2.51 lakh farmers and ₹175 crore aid to 3,500 families under welfare schemes. He also launches new agriculture infrastructure projects to support modern farming across Uttar Pradesh.

Upcoming News/Events

Madhya Pradesh

- CM Mohan Yadav says temples, technology, and tourism will drive new employment, with major religious sites being developed on the Ujjain model. He adds that the state is expanding temple infrastructure and promoting AI, digital growth, and health tourism to boost the economy.

Mumbai

- MSRTC plans to induct 8,300 new buses this year to reduce its daily revenue deficit of ₹1-1.5 crore. Transport Minister Pratap Sarnaik says the fleet expansion aims to boost ridership and strengthen the corporation's finances.
- Transporters in Maharashtra threaten an indefinite strike from March 5 over the e-challan system that has amassed ₹4,500 crore in fines, warning they will halt operations if the government fails to act.
- Mumbai Police will introduce metallic smart ID cards with embedded NFC chips and QR codes to help citizens verify officers and curb impersonation fraud. The move aims to tackle rising cases of conmen posing as policemen to extort money.

Pune

- Two flyovers at Hadapsar Gadital and Magarpatta Chowk may be demolished for the proposed 40-km multilevel flyover and metro corridor between Bhairoba Nullah and Yavat. Consultants have recommended the razing as part of the larger infrastructure revamp plan.
- The IITM, Pune, will establish a climate observation station in Bikaner under the Bharat Climate Observation Network, signing an MoU with Bikaner Technical University to advance collaborative climate research and long-term data collection.
- Traders at Pune's Agriculture Produce Market Committee call a bandh on February 25 to protest rising theft cases and poor traffic management in the Market Yard. They allege indiscriminate parking of heavy vehicles is disrupting operations despite security presence.

Punjab

- The Punjab Cabinet will deliberate on a ₹1,000 crore 'Punjab Government Food Programme' to distribute ration kits to NFSA beneficiaries. It is also expected to discuss the new Excise Policy for 2026-27 with a target to boost revenue.
- Punjab will present its State Budget on March 8, with the government likely to announce a ₹1,000 monthly stipend for women while ruling out any new taxes. Higher spending on health, education, and infrastructure is expected ahead of next year's elections.

Rajasthan

- Document verification for candidates selected in the Rajasthan Patwari Exam 2025 will be held from February 23 to 25 at the Udaipur District Collectorate. Selected candidates will undergo training starting February 26.

Tamil Nadu

- Tamil Nadu plans two priority road corridors to link the proposed Parandur Greenfield Airport with Chennai and key industrial hubs, including widening the Pallur-Sogandi Road and building a new 30.7 km greenfield connector.
- Union Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu says the ₹2,100 crore Coimbatore airport expansion, increasing terminal space to 75,000 sq m, will be completed by 2028. He also announces progress on new small airports at Neyveli and Vellore in Tamil Nadu.

Telangana

- Chief Electoral Officer C Sudarshan Reddy directs officials to speed up the voter progeny mapping survey in Hyderabad ahead of the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls. He stresses time-bound completion with accuracy and transparency during field inspections.
- Telangana plans to set up a State Medical Tourism Society and develop an integrated Medical Value Tourism hub in Hyderabad to boost global competitiveness. The initiative aims to position the city as a leading medical tourism destination in South Asia.

Uttar Pradesh

- Northern Railways will run six additional Holi special trains linking Punjab with Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, with two services passing through Ludhiana Junction. The move aims to ease festive rush for migrant passengers travelling home.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi says Uttar Pradesh is set to become a major semiconductor hub after laying the foundation for a ₹3,700 crore HCL-Foxconn OSAT facility along the Yamuna Expressway.

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

- Nigeria's President Bola Tinubu orders that all oil and gas revenues owed to the government be paid directly into the federation account to strengthen public finances. The move is part of sweeping fiscal reforms aimed at improving transparency and revenue management.
- Kenya returns to global markets with plans to buy back up to \$500 million of existing debt and issue longer-term bonds to refinance it. The move aims to ease financing pressures and manage its debt profile more sustainably.

America

- India and Brazil sign a mining cooperation pact to secure iron ore and critical minerals for India's expanding steel sector. The move supports Prime Minister Narendra Modi's target of boosting bilateral trade to \$20 billion within five years.
- Cuban security advisers and doctors are reportedly leaving Venezuela amid mounting US pressure to unwind the long-standing alliance, with Interim President Delcy Rodríguez replacing Cuban guards with Venezuelan bodyguards.

Asia Pacific

- Indonesia and the United States finalise a trade agreement cutting U.S. tariffs on Indonesian goods to 19% from 32% after nearly a year of negotiations. The deal aims to ease trade tensions and strengthen economic ties between the two countries.
- President Donald Trump meets Vietnamese leader To Lam and vows to work toward removing Vietnam from U.S. restricted lists limiting access to advanced technology. The move signals efforts to deepen bilateral ties and expand tech cooperation.

China

- India has begun easing post-2020 restrictions on Chinese equipment imports, permitting limited purchases by state-run power and coal firms. The move aims to address mounting shortages and delays in key infrastructure projects.

Europe

- Europe's five largest defence powers agree on a multi-million-euro project to fast-track low-cost air-defence systems, including autonomous drones and missiles. The initiative aims to bring new systems into production within 12 months to strengthen regional security.
- Denmark's King Frederik visits Nuuk to reaffirm unity with Greenland amid renewed U.S. interest in acquiring the Arctic territory. The trip underscores Denmark's support for Greenland in the face of comments by President Donald Trump.

Middle East

- Israeli strikes in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley kill at least 10 people, including a senior Hezbollah official, and wound around 50 others, security sources say. The Israeli military says it targeted Hezbollah sites in the Baalbek area.

Pakistan

- Pakistan says it carried out cross-border strikes on militant targets in Afghanistan after blaming recent suicide bombings on fighters operating from Afghan territory. Kabul alleges civilians were killed and vows a response, raising tensions along the border.
- Pakistan agrees with the U.S. to jointly redevelop New York's Roosevelt Hotel, enabling Islamabad to unlock value from one of its key overseas assets. The deal supports broader restructuring and privatisation efforts under Pakistan's IMF-backed reform programme.

United Kingdom

- Britain announces long-awaited reforms to England's special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) system as demand and costs continue to surge. The overhaul aims to address mounting financial pressures and improve support for affected students.

United States

- New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Massachusetts declare states of emergency and halt non-essential travel as a major blizzard brings heavy snowfall and strong winds. Thousands of flights are disrupted and National Guard units are deployed to assist with storm response.
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture defends a \$12 billion subsidy package as essential support for farmers facing economic hardship. Officials say the aid aims to prevent further financial strain across the farm sector.

Upcoming News/Events**Africa**

- The UN World Food Programme warns that its life-saving food aid in Somalia may halt by April without fresh funding, risking severe hunger for millions. Around 4.4 million people face crisis-level food insecurity amid drought, conflict, and shrinking humanitarian support.
- South Africa's trade ministry says it will oppose the liquidation of sugar producer Tongaat Hulett, citing risks to jobs, farmers, and the wider sugar industry. The 134-year-old company is a major miller with operations across southern Africa.

America

- Spain's foreign minister calls on the European Union to lift sanctions on Venezuela's interim president Delcy Rodríguez after lawmakers approved a limited amnesty bill, arguing the move could support political dialogue.
- Alberta plans to hold a fall referendum on limiting the intake of international students, temporary foreign workers, and asylum seekers. The move seeks to wrest greater control over immigration from the Canadian federal government.

Asia Pacific

- Asian economies assess fresh uncertainty after President Donald Trump vows new import tariffs, hours after the Supreme Court strikes down many of his earlier sweeping levies. The developments add confusion to global trade and raise concerns among U.S. trading partners in the region.
- Australia invokes rarely used counterterrorism laws to temporarily bar one of its citizens, currently held in a Syrian camp, from returning to the country. The move is aimed at preventing potential terror-related risks.

China

- Hong Kong plans to spend about HK\$4 billion (\$512 million) to buy out homeowners in a high-rise complex devastated by a fire that killed over 160 people. The proposal aims to support affected residents and address safety concerns following the tragedy.

Europe

- Germany is considering ordering additional U.S.-made F-35 fighter jets as its joint next-generation fighter programme with France faces setbacks, sources say. The move could increase Berlin's reliance on American military technology.

Middle East

- Iran and the United States will hold a third round of nuclear talks in Geneva on Thursday, Oman's foreign minister says, amid rising military tensions. The discussions come as President Donald Trump warns of serious consequences if no deal is reached over Tehran's nuclear programme.
- Saudi Arabia is pursuing a civil nuclear deal with the United States without the traditional non-proliferation safeguards, potentially granting the kingdom greater flexibility in advancing its nuclear energy programme.

Pakistan

- Pakistan seeks assurances that any proposed Gaza stabilization force under President Donald Trump's plan would be a peacekeeping mission, not tasked with disarming Hamas. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is expected to seek clarity on the mandate and command structure before committing troops.
- Pakistan's Punjab province will repatriate 20 Afghan nationals as part of its ongoing crackdown on undocumented migrants. The policy has strained relations with Kabul and drawn criticism from the United Nations.

United Kingdom

- The UK will unveil long-delayed reforms to England's special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) system as rising demand and soaring costs strain public finances. The overhaul aims to address funding pressures and improve support for vulnerable students.
- Britain and European allies including France, Germany, Italy and Poland will collaborate to develop low-cost air defence weapons. The initiative aims to strengthen protection of Europe's skies amid rising security concerns.

United States

- President Donald Trump will visit China from March 31 to April 2 for talks between the world's two largest economies, with U.S. tariffs set to dominate discussions. The trip follows a Supreme Court ruling overturning his sweeping import tariffs.

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