

# LAW 360°

Where every legal angle matters

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Monthly Newsletter



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# Real Estate Bytes



In 2025, Andhra Pradesh repealed the NALA Act, ending an outdated land assessment regime. Karnataka's K-RERA urged harmonisation of OC/CC rules. Maharashtra proposed one-time free regularisation of urban land, and the Succession Act removed mandatory probate, simplifying governance, ownership validation, and estate administration.

## Andhra Pradesh's Repeal Of The NALA Act: Implications For Land Regulation And Development

In September 2025, Andhra Pradesh repealed the NALA Act, 1963, ending a decades-old land assessment regime. The move aims to simplify land governance, reduce delays, encourage investment, and rely on modern urban, municipal, and digital regulatory frameworks.

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## Maharashtra Land Bill Moves To Regularise Legacy Urban Plot Irregularities

On 8 December 2025, Maharashtra tabled a bill to amend the Fragmentation Act, proposing a one-time free regularisation of decades-old urban and non-agricultural land transactions. The reform eases NA permissions, validates past transfers, clarifies land records, and grants legal ownership to nearly 60 lakh small plot holders statewide.

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## Regulatory Developments In Karnataka: OC And CC Compliance In Focus

As 2025 ends, K-RERA has urged Karnataka to harmonize OC and CC rules, citing inconsistent interpretations across laws. Regulatory ambiguity has caused delays, disputes, and buyer risk, underscoring the need for uniform certification to boost confidence and investment.

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## The End Of Mandatory Probate: A Quiet But Transformative Shift In Indian Succession Law

The Repealing and Amending Act, 2025 omits Section 213 of the Indian Succession Act, removing mandatory probate based on geography and religion. Wills can now be enforced without compulsory court certification, reducing delay, cost, and litigation, while retaining probate as an optional safeguard for complex, high-value, or disputed estates.

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# Banking & Finance



In December 2025, major banking reforms were introduced: the Banking Laws Amendment Act expanded deposit and locker nominations; RBI issued directions for zero-balance BSBD accounts and risk-based deposit insurance; and credit reporting standards were strengthened, enhancing depositor protection, financial inclusion, and regulatory oversight.

## Banking Laws (Amendment) Act, 2025

December 2025 saw rollout of key provisions of the Banking Laws (Amendment) Act, 2025, expanding deposit and locker nominations to four nominees. The reforms boost depositor autonomy, reduce succession disputes, protect banks during settlements, modernize compliance, and strengthen confidence in India's banking system.

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## A New Era For Banking Access: RBI Enhances Basic Savings Account Framework

On December 4, 2025, RBI issued seven amendment directions for Basic Savings Bank Deposit Accounts, effective April 1, 2026. The reforms mandate zero-balance access, free core services, digital transactions, minimum withdrawals, and uniform adoption across banks, strengthening financial inclusion, customer protection, and regulatory consistency.

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## RBI Approved Risk Based Deposit Insurance Premium Framework For Banks

On December 19, 2025, RBI approved a risk-based deposit insurance premium framework effective FY 2026–27, replacing the uniform rate. Premiums will reflect bank soundness, rewarding stronger institutions and incentivising risk management, while depositor insurance coverage remains unchanged at ₹5 lakh per bank.

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## Amendments To Credit Reporting Framework Under RBI Oversight

RBI issued 10 Amendment Directions under the Credit Information Companies Act, effective July 1, 2026, requiring frequent credit data reporting, uniform standards, timely rectification, and regulatory oversight. The amendments aim to enhance accuracy, efficiency, and reliability of credit reporting across banks, NBFCs, ARCs, and other financial institutions.

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# Intellectual Property



Delhi High Court granted Akasa Air an interim injunction against 26 defendants involved in trademark infringement and recruitment scams. The court ordered suspension of infringing domains, blocking of mobile numbers, UPI IDs, and bank accounts, and disclosure of KYC details, thereby protecting the airline's brand, public trust, and preventing further fraud.

## **Delhi High Court grants interim injunction to Akasa Air against trademark infringement and recruitment scams.**

Delhi High Court granted Akasa Air an interim injunction against 26 defendants for trademark infringement and recruitment scams. The court ordered suspension of infringing domains, blocking of mobile numbers, UPI IDs, and bank accounts, and disclosure of KYC details, protecting both the airline's brand and the public from fraud.

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## **Delhi HC grants Pawan Kalyan interim protection against AI deepfakes and unauthorized commercial use.**

Delhi High Court granted Pawan Kalyan interim protection against unauthorised commercial use of his personality via AI-generated deepfakes, synthetic content, and online merchandise. E-commerce platforms and AI sites must remove infringing material and disclose seller KYC, while fan pages may continue with disclaimers.

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## **MP High Court Dismisses Plea Against Film "Haq", Holds Privacy And Personality Rights Do Not Survive Death**

Madhya Pradesh High Court dismissed Siddiqua Begum Khan's petition to restrain the release of the film Haq, holding that posthumous privacy and personality rights do not survive death. The Court upheld creative freedom, CBFC certification, and fictionalisation based on public records, emphasising protection of free speech under Article 19(1)(a).

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## **Delhi HC grants Akasa Air interim injunction against trademark infringement, recruitment scams, and fake domains.**

Delhi High Court granted Akasa Air an interim injunction against 26 defendants engaged in trademark infringement and recruitment scams. The court ordered suspension of infringing domains, blocking of mobile numbers, UPI IDs, and bank accounts, and disclosure of KYC details, protecting the airline's brand and public trust.

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# Corporate & Commercial



RBI's March 2026 Master Direction unifies rupee interest rate derivatives rules, limits non-resident exposure, mandates reporting, and strengthens oversight, enhancing transparency and risk management. SEBI updates REIT classification, NCS Master Circular, and MII governance, boosting market flexibility, investor protection, and operational accountability.

## RBI Consolidates Rules for Rupee Interest Rate Derivatives

The RBI's Master Direction, effective March 1, 2026, unifies rupee interest rate derivatives rules, clarifies participation, limits non-resident exposure, restricts leverage, mandates OTC and exchange-traded reporting, and strengthens oversight. It enhances transparency, risk management, and compliance for banks, NBFCs, FPIs, and corporates.

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## REITS Move Into The Equity Fold: SEBI's New Investment Framework Explained

SEBI reclassifies REITs as equity instruments, effective January 1, 2026, allowing Mutual Funds and SIFs to invest under a structured framework, grandfathering existing investments, updating scheme documents, and including REITs in equity indices from July 1, 2026, enhancing clarity, participation, and investor protection.

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## SEBI Updates Conditions for Reduction in Denomination of Debt Securities

SEBI amends NCS Master Circular to allow zero-coupon debt securities and non-convertible redeemable preference shares to be issued at a reduced face value of Rs. 10,000 via private placement, increasing market flexibility, investor participation, and enabling long-term, compounded-return investment options.

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## Provisions Relating To Strengthening Governance Of Market Infrastructure Institutions (MIs)

SEBI's December 2025 circular strengthens governance of Market Infrastructure Institutions, defining Managing and Executive Directors' roles, clarifying reporting lines, ensuring independent oversight of risk, compliance, technology, and investor grievance functions, enhancing accountability, operational resilience, and market stability.

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# Energy, Infrastructure & Mobility



CESTAT Ahmedabad ruled garnet exports, linked to Rare Earth Elements, are strictly regulated, with mis-declaration and tariff misuse justifying seizures to protect national security. The Supreme Court confirmed post-grid synchronisation electricity as “firm power,” ensuring fixed charges. PNG Rules 2025 streamline petroleum leases, and India announced 50 new hydrocarbon E&P blocks with investor-friendly terms.

## CESTAT Upholds Export Restrictions On Garnet, Regardless Of Origin

CESTAT Ahmedabad ruled that garnet, linked to Rare Earth Elements, is strictly regulated for export regardless of origin. Mis-declaration, tariff heading misuse, and non-compliance with DGFT canalisation justify seizures and penalties, reinforcing national security, radiation safety, and strategic mineral controls.

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## Streamlining Hydrocarbon Development: The PNG Rules 2025 Explained

The Petroleum and Natural Gas Rules, 2025, create a single petroleum lease covering exploration, development, and production. They set fixed terms, streamline approvals, define compliance, safety, and environmental standards, replace criminal penalties with financial fines, and aim to attract investment efficiently.

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## Supreme Court Affirms Right Of Power Generators To Fixed Charges From Date Of Grid Synchronisation

Supreme Court rules electricity supplied after grid synchronisation qualifies as “firm power,” entitling generators to fixed charges, even before full project commissioning, upholding TNERC and APTEL decisions, clarifying unit-wise COD, statutory precedence over unapproved PPAs, and ensuring financial fairness.

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## India Plans 50 New Hydrocarbon Blocks In Major Energy Independence Mass Action

The Government of India announced 50 new hydrocarbon E&P blocks in December 2025 to boost domestic energy self-sufficiency. The offering spans OALP-X, DSF-IV, and CBM rounds, with relaxed eligibility, revenue-sharing, marketing freedom, and a simplified regulatory framework to attract investment and support sustainable energy development.

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# Tax Law



The Supreme Court ruled aluminium shelves for mushroom cultivation are “aluminium structures” (7610), not agricultural machinery, emphasizing statutory and technical criteria over trade parlance. CGST (Fifth Amendment) Rules, 2025, and DGFT Public Notice 42/2025–26 enhance GST valuation, ITC limits, and export invoice reporting, while hotel premises declarations are now electronic via Annexures VII–IX.

## **Commissioner Of Customs (Import) V. Welkin Foods (2026 INSC 19), Dated 06th January 2025**

The Supreme Court clarified that tariff classification relies on statutory and technical criteria, not common trade parlance. Aluminium shelves for mushroom cultivation, providing only structural support without operating machinery, are correctly classifiable as “aluminium structures” (7610), overturning CESTAT’s view that they were parts of agricultural machinery.

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## **GST Overhaul From Feb 2026: RSP-Based Valuation Introduced And ITC Utilisation Curbs Expanded; No. 20/2025–Central Tax**

The Government has notified the CGST (Fifth Amendment) Rules, 2025, effective 1 February 2026, introducing significant changes including a Retail Sale Price–based valuation mechanism under new Rule 31D for specified supplies and expanding ITC restrictions under Rule 86B(f), enhancing GST compliance and anti-evasion measures.

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## **DGFT Mandates GST Invoice Details In Ebrc: Revised Compliance Framework Effective 13 January 2026; No. 42/2025–26**

DGFT’s Public Notice No. 42/2025–26 mandates reporting GSTIN, GST invoice number, and invoice date in eBRCs from 13 January 2026, enhancing traceability and reconciliation between exports and GST, but potentially increasing exporters’ compliance burden due to multiple invoices, staggered payments, and manual data entry.

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## **GST Portal enables e-filing of declarations for “Specified Premises” hotel services from 4 January 2026.**

Under Notification No. 05/2025 – Central Tax (Rate) dated 16 January 2025, the GST Portal allows electronic filing for declaring hotel accommodation premises as “specified premises.” Existing taxpayers must file Annexure VII by 31 March 2026; new applicants file Annexure VIII within 15 days of ARN. Option continues unless opted out via Annexure IX.

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# Competition Law

NCLAT upheld CCI's WhatsApp ruling, retaining consent and transparency obligations while removing the ad-data-sharing ban. Kerala High Court and Supreme Court confirmed CCI's jurisdiction over JioStar's preferential discount practices. CCI found Maharashtra liquor associations liable for coordinated pricing. Minority acquisition of ~32% in V.I.P. Industries cleared, with no competition concerns.

## Appellate Tribunal Clarifies Scope Of Data Related Remedies In Whatsapp Privacy Policy Abuse Of Dominance Case.

NCLAT upheld CCI's abuse findings on WhatsApp's 2021 privacy update, retaining consent and transparency remedies while removing the five-year ad-data-sharing ban. WhatsApp must provide clear disclosures, enable meaningful opt-in/opt-out, and ensure revocable consent. Dominant platforms must separate core functions from non-essential data use.

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## Parallel Jurisdiction Confirmed: Courts Allow CCI Probe In JioStar Case Despite TRAI Framework

Kerala High Court and Supreme Court upheld CCI's jurisdiction over JioStar's alleged abuse of dominance in broadcasting and cable distribution. Preferential discount arrangements favoring KCCL were investigated. Companies in regulated sectors must ensure compliance with both competition law and sectoral regulations.

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## CCI Finds Maharashtra Liquor Retail Associations Guilty Of Cartelisation, Issues Cease-And-Desist Order

On 11 December 2025, the CCI held Maharashtra liquor associations liable for fixing margins, discounts, and requiring LOIs/NOCs. Office bearers were also held responsible, though no fines were imposed. Industry bodies must avoid coordinated pricing or market entry restrictions.

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## CCI Approves Multiples Equity Funds' Minority Stake In VIP Industries Limited Amid Limited Market Overlaps

On 26 August 2025, the CCI approved Multiples Equity Funds and the Sachetis acquiring ~32% of V.I.P. Industries. Limited horizontal and vertical overlaps, low market shares, and competitive markets led to no appreciable adverse effect on competition. Minority acquisitions in consumer brands face limited hurdles.

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# KEY CONTACTS



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