

Punjab Govt moved resolution about additional water to Haryana in the State Assembly

Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) has ordered the release of an additional 4,500 cusecs of water to Haryana, which Punjab opposes.

About Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB)

- BBMB, formerly the **Bhakra Management Board**, was established under **Section 79 of the Punjab Reorganisation Act 1966**.
- **Functions**
 - ⊕ **Administration, Operation & Maintenance** of Bhakra-Nangal Project, Beas Project Unit-I (Beas Satluj Link Project) and Beas Project Unit- II (Pong Dam)
 - ⊕ Regulates the supply of **Water & Power from Bhakra Nangal and Beas Projects** to the states of Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi and Chandigarh.

Mechanism for water regulation

- **Constitutional framework**
 - ⊕ **Entry 17 of the State List:** Empowers states on matters related to water supply, irrigation, canals, drainage, etc.
 - ⊕ **Entry 56 of the Union List:** Regulation and development of inter-State rivers and river valleys
 - ⊕ **Article 262:** Parliament can make laws to resolve disputes over inter-state river waters.
- **Parliament enactments**
 - ⊕ **River Board Act 1956:** The Central Government may establish River Boards via notification to advise states on regulation and development of inter-State rivers or valleys.
 - ⊕ **Inter-State Water Disputes Act, 1956:** It empowers the Centre government to set up a **Water Disputes Tribunal** if the issue can't be resolved through negotiations.



Amid Global Economic Slowdown, India achieved highest ever Exports in Financial Year 2024-25

As per the RBI, **India's total exports (Merchandise + Services) have reached \$824.9 billion in 2024-25** rising by 6.01 % from \$778.1 billion in 2023-24.

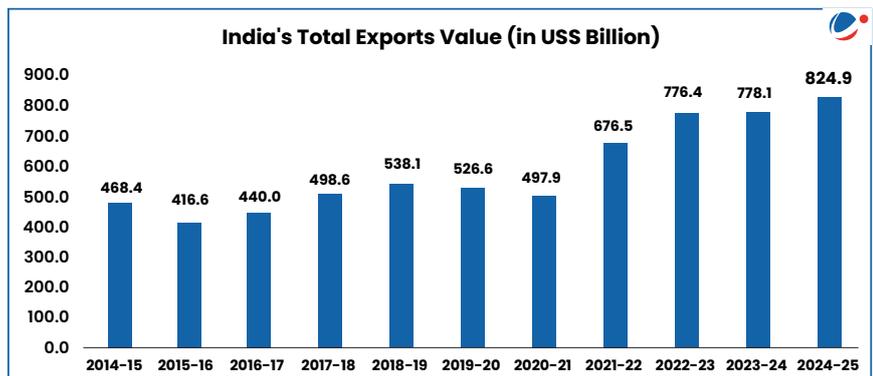
- This is **despite global slowdown triggered by trade disruptions** due to Red Sea crisis, Ukraine war, drought in Panama Canal, increase in Non-Tariff Measures, rising energy prices etc.

Key data and trends

- **Merchandise Exports:** Have **marginally increased to US\$437.4 billion**, from US\$437.1 billion in 2023-24.
- **Services Exports:** Reached a **historic high of US\$387.5 billion** in 2024-25, up 13.6% from US\$341.1 billion in 2023-24.

Factors Driving Export Growth

- **Policy Push:** Government boosted exports via New Foreign Trade Policy, sector-specific schemes, Trade Facilitation, Districts as Export Hubs Initiatives and MSME support.
- **Diversification of export markets:** Rising demand from Southeast Asia, Africa, and Latin America offset global slowdowns.
- **Trade Agreements:** New bilateral and multilateral deals, such as **India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)**, opened markets and lowered barriers, particularly for services and electronics.
- **Supply Chain Realignment:** India became a reliable alternative in China-plus-one strategies, attracting global companies.



Share of Gold in India's Forex Reserves has Doubled in last Four Years

Aligning with a global trend of central banks boosting gold holdings, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has increased its share of gold in the foreign exchange to 11.70% (879.59 metric tonnes).

- ▶ India's gross foreign exchange reserves comprise foreign currency assets of the Reserve Bank, gold held by RBI, Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) and Reserve Position in the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
 - ⊕ Reserve Position in the IMF is not included as part of foreign exchange reserves by some countries as they may not be available on immediate demand.

Why are Central Banks around the world hoarding gold?

- ▶ **Diversification away from the US Dollar:** Central banks are diversifying their reserves away from the dollar to reduce their exposure to potential dollar devaluation.
- ▶ **Hedging against Inflation:** With global inflation rates on the rise, gold acts as a hedge against the eroding purchasing power of countries' currencies.
- ▶ **Geopolitical Risks:** With tensions between major powers like the US, China, and Russia creating uncertainty, gold offers better security than fiat currencies or government bonds.
 - ⊕ Fiat currency refers to a government-issued currency that isn't backed by a physical commodity like gold or silver.

Risk Associated with storing gold

- ▶ **Reduced Liquidity and Flexibility:** Converting large gold holdings to cash during urgent needs is slower and costlier than liquidating foreign currency assets.
- ▶ **Zero Yield:** Gold yields no interest or dividends, unlike bonds or currency deposits.
- ▶ **Storage and Security Costs:** Physical gold demands secure storage, often in domestic or overseas vaults (e.g., Bank of England), increasing costs for storage, insurance, and transportation.



Northeast's first geothermal production well successfully drilled

It is drilled by the Centre for Earth Sciences and Himalayan Studies (CESHS) at Dirang in Arunachal Pradesh.

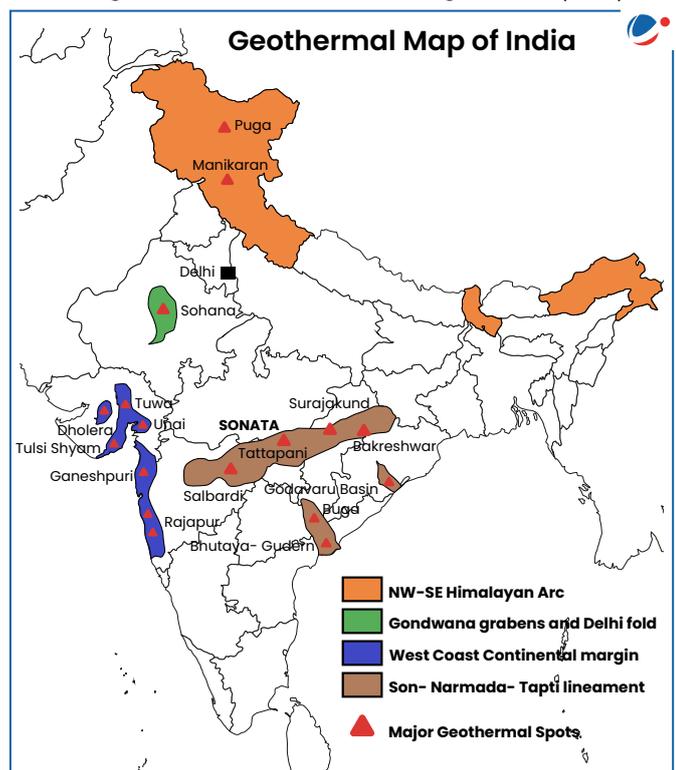
- ▶ The project is the result of international scientific collaboration between CESHS, the Norwegian Geotechnical Institute (NGI), Oslo, Norway, the Icelandic geothermal firm Geotropy ehf, and the drilling team from Guwahati Boring Service (GBS).

About Geothermal Energy

- ▶ Geothermal energy is heat energy from the earth—geo (earth) + thermal (heat).
 - ⊕ Geothermal technology extracts this energy/heat for direct heating and cooling, or converts it into electricity.
 - ⊕ This internal heat/thermal energy is generated from radioactive decay and continual heat loss from earth's formation.
- ▶ **Advantages:** Clean & inexpensive renewable energy, Ability to operate year-round, etc.
- ▶ **Disadvantages:** Possible land subsidence, high transportation charges of energy, Possible release of toxic chemicals, etc.

Step taken to promote Geothermal energy

- ▶ Geological Survey of India (GSI) published a report titled 'Geothermal Atlas of India, 2022', identifying potential geothermal sites.
- ▶ Renewable Energy Research and Technology Development Programme (RE-RTD) by MNRE to promote indigenous R&D for cost-effective renewable energy, including geothermal.
- ▶ Singareni Collieries Company limited (SCCL) has commissioned a 20 kW pilot geothermal power plant in Manuguru area of Bhadradi Kothagudem district in Telangana.



In a Historic First, Supreme Court Publishes Declaration of Judges' Assets on Website

Supreme Court (SC) has now made it **mandatory to publish the declaration of assets by Judges** on the Supreme Court website.

- On 1st April 2025, the Full Court of the SC had resolved that **Judges should make a declaration of their assets on assuming office** and whenever any acquisition of a substantial nature is made, **to the Chief Justice of India**.
 - ⊕ Unlike public servants and elected representatives, judges are **not legally bound to publicly declare their assets**.
 - ⊕ However, in 1997, SC adopted a resolution that the **"judges should declare all assets** including those of spouses and dependents **to the CJI"**.
 - ⊕ In 2009, SC resolved to **declare the assets of judges on its website on a voluntary basis**.
- Present decision is the reiteration of **1997 Restatement of Values of Judicial Life**, adopted by SC, which lays down certain judicial standards and principles to be observed and followed by the Judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts.

1997 Restatement of Values of Judicial Life

- Avoid actions that erode people's faith in higher judiciary.
- Must not hear and decide cases where a family member or friend is involved
- Must not publicly express views on political matters that may arise for judicial determination
- Must not accept gifts or hospitality from anyone besides family and friends
- Must not engage in any trade or business.
- Should not seek any financial benefit connected to her office unless it is clearly available.



The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) asks states to conduct mock drills to evaluate civil defence preparedness

MHA has decided to organise the Civil Defence Exercise across the **244 categorised Civil Defence Districts** of the country.

- **Civil Defence Districts** are those districts which are tactically and strategically considered vulnerable from enemy attack points of view.

Civil Defence Exercise

- It is a **preparedness exercise** aimed at testing how civilians and government systems respond during emergencies like war, missile attacks, aerial strikes, or disasters.
- It assesses the **operational efficacy and coordination** of various Civil Defence measures including:
 - ⊕ Effectiveness of **air raid warning systems, operationalisation of Hotline or Radio Communication Links with the Indian Air Force**, as well as to **test the functionality of control room**.
 - ⊕ **Training of civilians and students** to protect themselves in the event of a hostile attack.
 - ⊕ Provision for early **camouflaging of vital installations** and update of evacuation plan and its rehearsal.
- Last such drill was conducted in the **run-up to the 1971 war between India & Pakistan**.

Civil Defence Provisions in India

- **Civil Defence Act, 1968**, passed after **India-China War (1962) and India-Pakistan War (1965)**, provides for measures affording protection to any person, property, place or thing against any hostile attack, whether from air, land, sea or other places.
- Act authorized the raising of **Civil Defence Corps** and for making Rules and Regulations for Civil Defence.



Also In News



Appointment of CBI Director

The Committee to recommend the name of new CBI Director failed to reach consensus.

Appointment Process

- As per the **Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act 1946**, the CBI Director is **appointed by the Central Government** on the recommendation of a **3-members committee** consisting of
 - ⊕ **Prime Minister (Chairperson)**
 - ⊕ **Chief Justice of India** (or **Judge of the Supreme Court** nominated by him)
 - ⊕ **Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha** (or the leader of the single largest opposition party in Lok Sabha).
- **Tenure: 2 years, extendable to 3 more years (1 year at a time).**



Operation Shiva

Indian Security Forces Launches **Operation Shiva** to guard **Amarnath Yatra**.

- This is amid the backdrop of **Pahalgam Terror attack** and tensions between India and Pakistan.

About Shri Amarnath ji

- **Located in Anantnag district at 13,000 ft**, Amarnath Cave houses the **ice lingam, the phallic symbol of Lord Shiva**.
- Two smaller ice stalagmite represent **Parvati, his wife, and Ganesha, his son**.
- **Pilgrimage occurs in Shraavan month**, when the lingam reaches full size, and the origin of the pilgrimage is described in a **Sanskrit book "Bringesha Samhita"**.



Piprahwa Relics

The Ministry of Culture takes steps to halt the auction of piprahwa relics by Sotheby's Hong Kong.

About Piprahwa Relics

- **History:** Excavated in 1898 by William Claxton Peppé from the Piprahwa Stupa (ancient Kapilavastu, the birthplace of Lord Buddha).
- Relics include **bone fragments, crystal and soapstone caskets, a sandstone coffer, and offerings like gold ornaments and gemstones.**
 - ⊕ An inscription in Brahmi script identifies the relics as those of the Buddha, deposited by the Sakya clan.



MICE Industry

The Ministry of Tourism and Culture aims to elevate at least 10 Indian cities into the world's top Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) destinations.

India as an emerging destination for MICE Industry

- India is emerging as a **global MICE powerhouse** which generated **USD 49.4 billion in 2024**, projected to reach USD 103.6 billion by 2030, with a 13% CAGR.
- **Factors:** **Robust economic growth, world-class infrastructure (roads, railways), and government support** have already helped in developing world class convention centres like **Bharat Mandapam, Jio World Centre etc.**

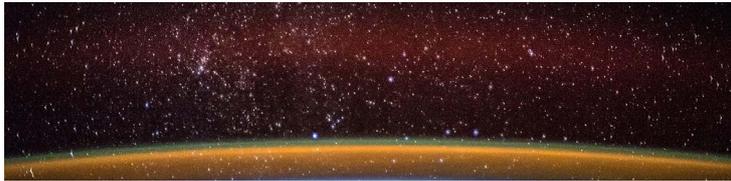


Airglow

Airglow has been captured above the La Silla Observatory in Chile's Atacama Desert.

About Airglow

- Airglow occurs when atoms and molecules in the upper atmosphere, **excited by ultraviolet ray from sun**, emit light in order to shed their excess energy.
 - ⊕ Airglow is **ever-present in the night sky**, but is typically too **faint to be seen by the naked eye** and can only be detected by **high-precision cameras in dark locations.**
- The phenomenon is similar to auroras, but where auroras are **driven by high-energy particles originating from the solar wind**, airglow is sparked by day-to-day solar radiation.



Executive Director at the IMF

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has appointed Parameswaran Iyer as the new Executive Director, representing India at IMF's Executive Board.

About IMF's Executive Board

- The Executive Board (the Board) is responsible for **conducting the day-to-day business of the IMF.**
- It is **composed of 25 Directors**, who are **elected by member countries or by groups of countries**, and the **Managing Director**, who serves as its **Chairman.**
- The Board **represents all IMF member countries.**
- It **approves IMF financing** to help member countries address **temporary balance of payments problems.**



Nilgiri Tahr

Traditional Nilgiri tahr habitats in Coimbatore Forest Division show **signs of population revival**, according to synchronised census in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

About Nilgiri Tahr

- Endemic to **Western Ghats**, it is the **only mountain ungulate in southern India** amongst the 12 species present in India.
- **Habitat:** Open montane grassland habitats.
 - ⊕ Distributed across Western Ghats between Nilgiris in the north and Kanyakumari hills in the south.
- **Threats:** Habitat loss, livestock competition, hydro projects, monoculture plantations, and occasional hunting.
- **Project Nilgiri Tahr:** Flagship project of Tamil Nadu state to protect its state animal.
- **Conservation Status:**
 - ⊕ **IUCN Red List: Endangered.**
 - ⊕ **Wildlife (Protection) Act of India, 1972: Schedule I.**



Luna 12

Faroe Islands Space Program's initiative is **harnessing the gravitational pull of Moon** to generate electricity through Luna 12.

About Luna 12

- Luna 12 is a **tidal kite** that captures underwater currents off the Faroe Islands' coast, converting them into renewable power.
 - ⊕ **Tidal Kites** is a type of underwater turbine that generates electricity by harnessing power of ocean currents and tides driven by Moon's Gravitational Pull.
- It is part of Swedish company Minesto's **Dragon Class of tidal kites.**
- **Significance:** Tidal Energy offers predictable and consistent renewable energy unlike solar or wind energy.



Mission for Advancement of High-impact Areas on Electric Vehicles (MAHA-EV) Mission

The Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) announced the selection of **seven e-Nodes** for support under its MAHA-EV mission

- **Each selected electric mobility node (e-nodes)** will execute the project in consortia mode involving academic institutions/R&D laboratories with the mandatory industry participation.

About MAHA-EV mission

- It is a program of ANRF.
 - ⊕ **ANRF is a statutory body** established with an aim to seed, fund, and coordinate, research and development across institutions in the country.
- **Aim:** To catalyze India's leadership in next-generation electric mobility solutions, aligned with the goals of sustainability, innovation, and self-reliance.

