

## 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.

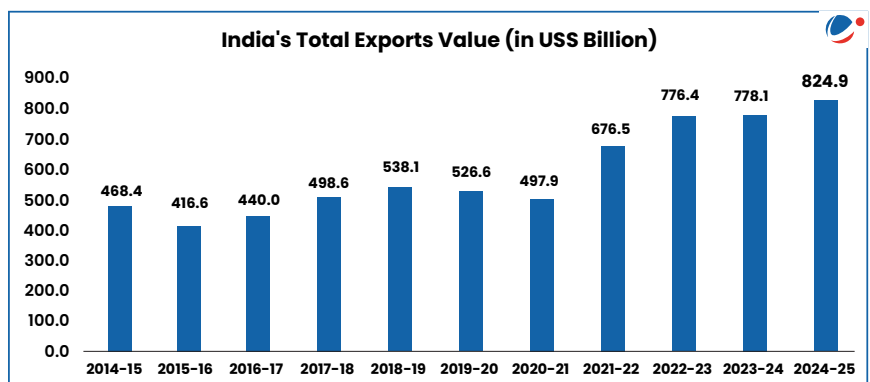
- This is **despite global slowdown triggered by trade disruptions** due to Red Sea crisis, Ukraine war, drought in Panama Canal, increase in Non-Tariff Measures, rising energy prices etc.

**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.

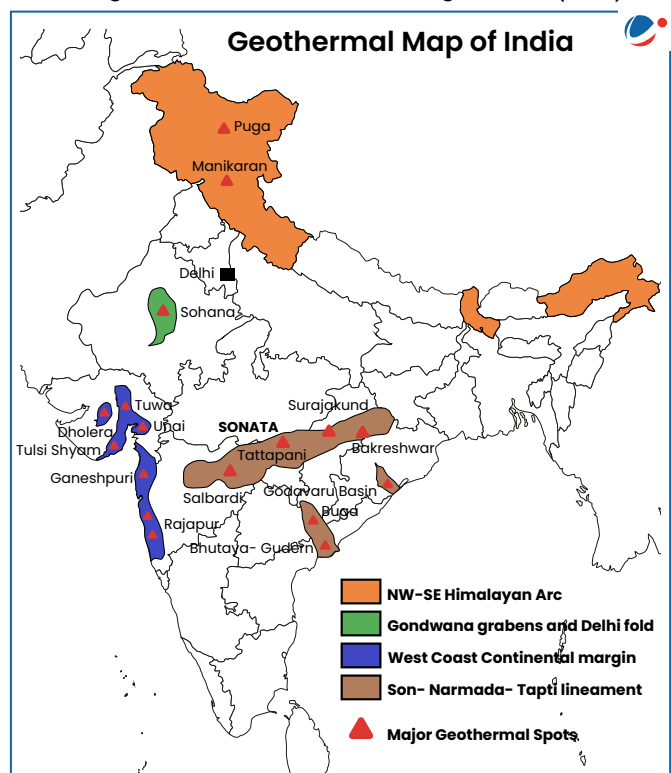
- The project is the **result of international scientific collaboration** between CESHS, the Norwegian Geotechnical Institute (NGI), Oslo, Norway, the Icelandic geothermal firm Geotropy ehf, and the drilling team from Guwahati Boring Service (GBS).

### 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 Shravan 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.

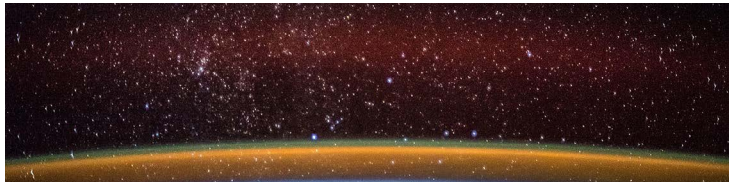


### Airglow

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.



AHMEDABAD



BENGALURU



BHOPAL



CHANDIGARH



DELHI



GUWAHATI



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