



THE HINDU ANALYSIS

9th March 2024

by saurabh
pandey



THE HINDU



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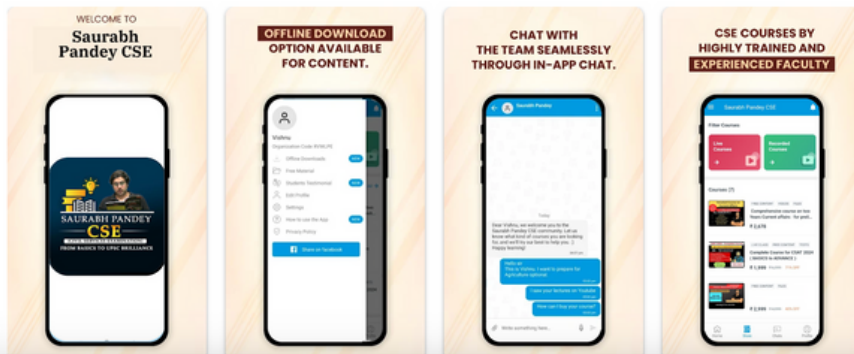
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India and EFTA

- **India and the four-nation European Free Trade Association (EFTA), which includes Switzerland, Finland, Norway and Liechtenstein, is likely to sign a long-negotiated free trade agreement on March 10, aimed at increasing trade and investment flows, job creation and economic growth, according to multiple sources.**

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India's trade with EFTA

(in million dollars)

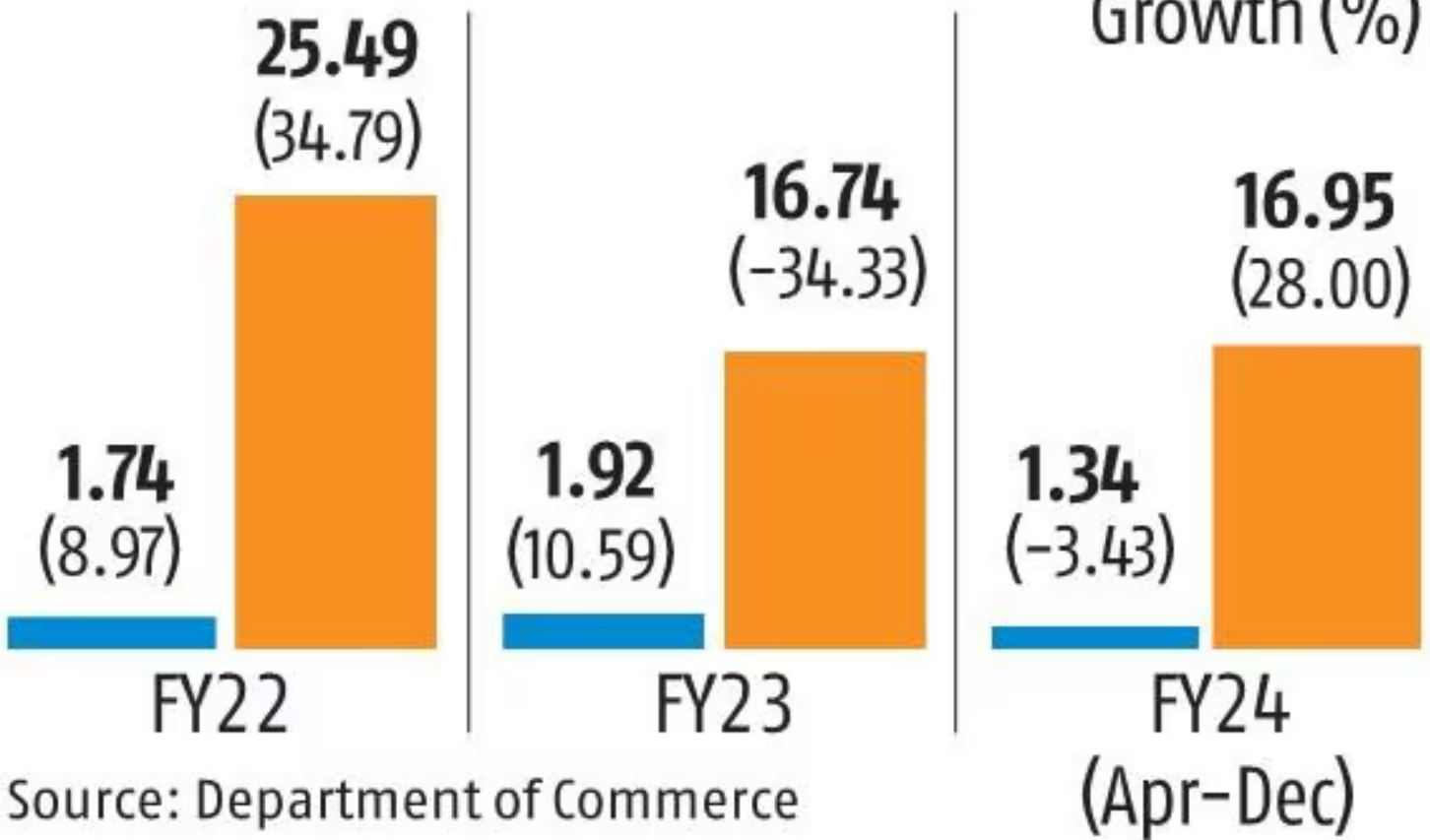
EFTA countries	Exports	Imports	Trade balance
Iceland	13	5	8
Liechtenstein	0	8	-8
Norway	484	782	-298
Switzerland	1,382	19,657	-18,275
TOTAL	1,879	20,452	-18,574

*CY2023

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INDIA-EFTA TRADE

■ Export (\$ bn) ■ Import (\$ bn) Figures in brackets
Growth (%)



- **The proposed India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) is expected to lead to investments worth \$100 billion from the four-country bloc into India over the next 15 years generating an estimated one million jobs,**
- **The IndiaEFTA TEPA is expected to be signed .**

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- **.This is the first FTA where India has got a commitment on investment and employment from partner nations,**
- **The pact is also likely to bring down the huge trade deficit India has with the bloc**

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Exploration license

- **First, two States – Karnataka and Rajasthan – have introduced auctions for exploration licences of critical and deep-seated minerals, while four others – Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh – are expected to follow suit soon.**
- **Auctions in Rajasthan and Karnataka were introduced on March 6, and covered critical and deepseated minerals such as gold, copper and lithium.**

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- **This significant development follows the amendment of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, through the MMDR Amendment Act, 2023.**
- **The amendment introduced a new mineral concession of exploration licence for 29 critical and deep-seated minerals, aiming to enhance exploration and mining action .**

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- **Critical and deep-seated minerals such as cobalt, lithium, nickel, gold, silver, and copper, known for their challenging exploration and mining processes, are now accessible for reconnaissance and prospecting operations under the newly established Exploration Licence.**



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SDGs And Gender equality

- Gender equality is not just a matter of social justice; it is also a prerequisite for sustainable development. Women play a crucial role in energy access, production, and consumption.**
- Yet, they often face significant barriers that limit their participation and impact in the energy sector.**
- This gender disparity not only hampers individual opportunities but also hinders overall economic growth and environmental sustainability**

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- In many parts of the world, women bear primary responsibility for household energy management that includes cooking, heating, and lighting.
- However, research has shown that energy infrastructure tends to reach women last, yet the lack of access to modern energy affects women and children disproportionately

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- **According to the World Health Organization (WHO), household air pollution leads to a staggering 3.2 million premature deaths each year – nearly half of all air pollution-related deaths – 60% of which are women and children.**
- **This not only perpetuates energy poverty but also exposes women and their families to health risks associated with household air pollution.**
- **Another aspect that is particularly worrying is that the energy sector remains one of the least gender-diverse sectors.**
- **Women represent 32% of full-time employees in the renewable energy sector and only 22% in the energy sector overall; this is in comparison to 48% of women workers in the global labour force.**

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- In India, for example, only 10% of women hold technical posts in the energy sector, as per the International Energy Agency (IEA).
- This gender disparity is fuelled by disparities in educational access, restricted opportunities for women to acquire technical skills and training, and inequitable company policies, among other contributing factors.

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steps

- **Governments, non-state actors, international institutions and philanthropic organisations have a critical role to play in providing an enabling environment, innovative solutions and transformative platforms to not only increase access to clean energy but also deliver groundbreaking solutions to promote women’s meaningful participation in the sustainable energy transition.**
- **Initiatives such as the Women at the Forefront programme and the Energy Transitions Innovation Challenge (ENTICE) provide a forum for individuals, especially women, to embark on entrepreneurial ventures and drive collective action for sustainable energy practices.**

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- **Distributed Renewable Energy (DRE), which are already being deployed by various State governments in India in collaboration with philanthropic organisations, to quickly provide affordable energy access and reduce the everyday drudgery of women's work, thereby increasing their productivity.**
- **Solar Mamas is one inspirational initiative started in India by Barefoot College to train illiterate women to become solar engineers, bringing clean power and light to their communities**

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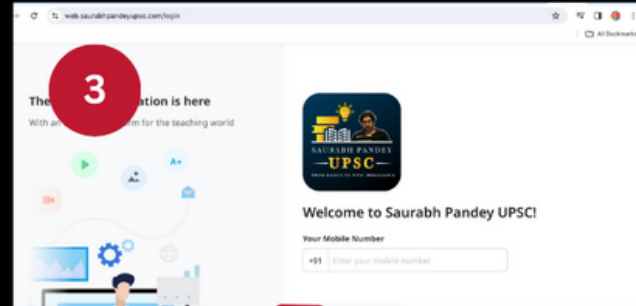
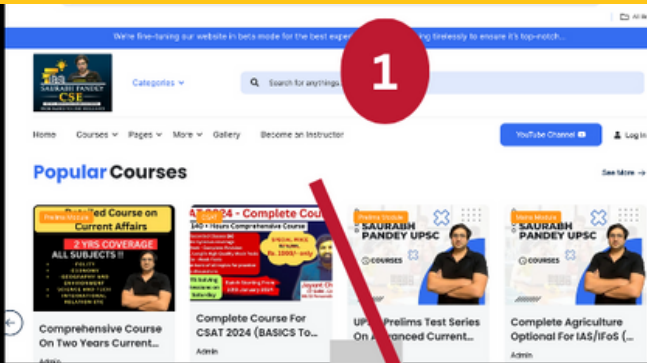
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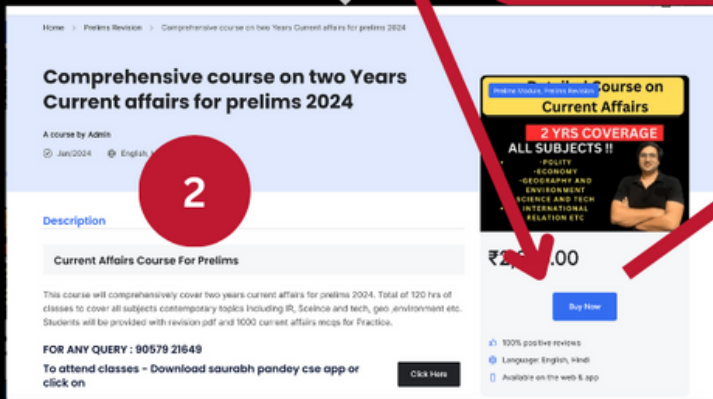
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