



STATE PCS CA

(CONSOLIDATION)

UTTARAKHAND

**JUNE
2024**

Drishti, 641, First Floor, Dr. Mukherjee
Nagar, Delhi-110009

Inquiry (English): 8010-440-440

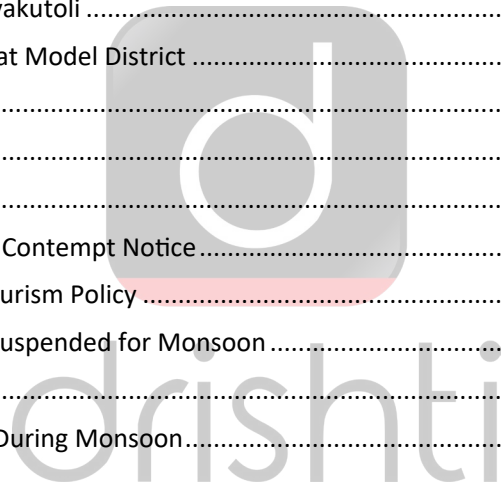
Inquiry (Hindi): 8750-187-501

Website: www.drishtias.com

Email: help@groupdrishti.in

Content

● Workers Rally Against Anti-Encroachment Drives.....	3
● Astro Tourist in Uttarakhand	3
● Muradi Demands Village Status Back.....	3
● Relief to Uttarakhand from Wildfires	4
● 3rd Indian Analytical Congress (IAC) in Dehradun.....	5
● World Environment Day	5
● Sahastra Tal Trek	6
● Dehradun Litchis Hit by Heat.....	6
● Forest Fires a Concern for India.....	6
● Bharat Gaurav Express	7
● 'Home of the Himalayas' Initiative	8
● Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary.....	8
● Renaming of Joshimath & Kosiyakutoli	8
● Action Plan to Make Champawat Model District	9
● Crowd Eye Device	10
● Mines Surveillance System	10
● Special Tourist Train	11
● Uttarakhand High Court Issued Contempt Notice	12
● Amendment in Uttarakhand Tourism Policy	12
● Adi Kailash, Om Parvat Yatras Suspended for Monsoon	13
● Khalanga Reserve Forest	13
● Risk Posed by 13 Glacial Lakes During Monsoon.....	14



Workers Rally Against Anti-Encroachment Drives

Why in News?

A large **public rally** took place at **Gandhi Park** to commemorate the **92nd anniversary of the Tilari agitation**. The participants included daily wage earners and members of social organizations that were protesting against the anti-encroachment activities initiated by civic bodies.

Key Points

- The drives are being carried out in compliance with the **National Green Tribunal's** directives to remove illegal structures from the flood plains of the **Rispana river**.
- Despite the municipal commissioner agreeing that any valid ID could be used as proof of residence, the documents were rejected by **Mussoorie Dehradun Development Authority (MDDA)**.
- The protester highlighted the lack of time given to challenge these rejections and avoid their families' eviction.

Tilari Agitation

- **On May 30, 1930**, a significant satyagraha took place at Tilari against the forestry policies of **Tehri Garhwal state**, which resembled those implemented by the British in the rest of Uttarakhand.
- While the **Maharaja of Tehri** was away in Europe, his Prime Minister, Chakradhar Juyal, brutally suppressed the Tilari protest in a manner reminiscent of the **Jallianwala Bagh tragedy**.
- Troops gunned down defenseless individuals, including young ones, and numerous perished in the **Yamuna River** while attempting to escape.

Astro Tourist in Uttarakhand

Why in News?

Recently, the **Uttarakhand government** organised a **three-day 'Nakshatra Sabha'** to promote **astro tourism** in the region.

- Besides astro tourism, the state is also focusing on green tourism, adventure tourism, and wellness tourism

Key Points

- The event is part of Uttarakhand's initiative to promote **multidimensional tourism** in the state.
- This pioneering initiative aims to make Uttarakhand a premier destination for celestial admirers and travelers seeking unique experiences under the night sky.
 - The event took place at **George Everest Peak in Mussoorie**, known for its **spectacular views** of the **snow-clad Himalayan peaks** and the **Doon Valley**.
- The event featured stargazing through specialized instruments, talks by experts, an astrophotography competition, and special solar observations.

Muradi Demands Village Status Back

Why in News?

Muradi was merged into Naugaon Nagar Panchayat in 2018, alongside Mungra, Naugaon, and Dhari Gram Panchayats.

- Since becoming part of the Nagar Panchayat, the **village residents have reported experiencing more losses than gains**.

Key Points

- Agriculture is the primary income source in village, but **Nagar Panchayat** lacks farming facilities.
 - Irrigation canals (kools) maintained by the former Gram Panchayat are now neglected.
 - Increased wild animal intrusions (monkeys, pigs, stray cattle) threaten crops.
- A major canal damaged during highway expansion has remained unrepaired for five years and smaller canals also suffer damage, impacting irrigation.
 - Local youth raised Rs 35,000 for temporary canal repairs, which proved ineffective without government support.
- Transition from Gram Panchayat to Nagar Panchayat led to the **loss of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) benefits**.
- Residents now face higher house taxes, water, and electricity tariffs without service improvements.
- A major concern of Muradi residents is the **increased migration**.

Note:



- The village boasts a historically non-migratory community, **but residents fear that urban incorporation will disrupt this tradition.**

MGNREGA Scheme

➤ About:

- MGNREGA is one of the largest work guarantee programmes in the world launched in 2005 by the **Ministry of Rural development.**
- It provides a legal guarantee for one hundred days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any rural household willing to do public work-related unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage.

➤ Implementation Agency:

- The **Ministry of Rural Development (MRD)** is monitoring the entire implementation of this scheme in association with state governments.

➤ Objective:

- This act was introduced with an aim of improving the **Purchasing Power** of the rural people, primarily semi or unskilled work to people living below poverty line in rural India.
- It attempts to bridge the gap between the rich and poor in the country.

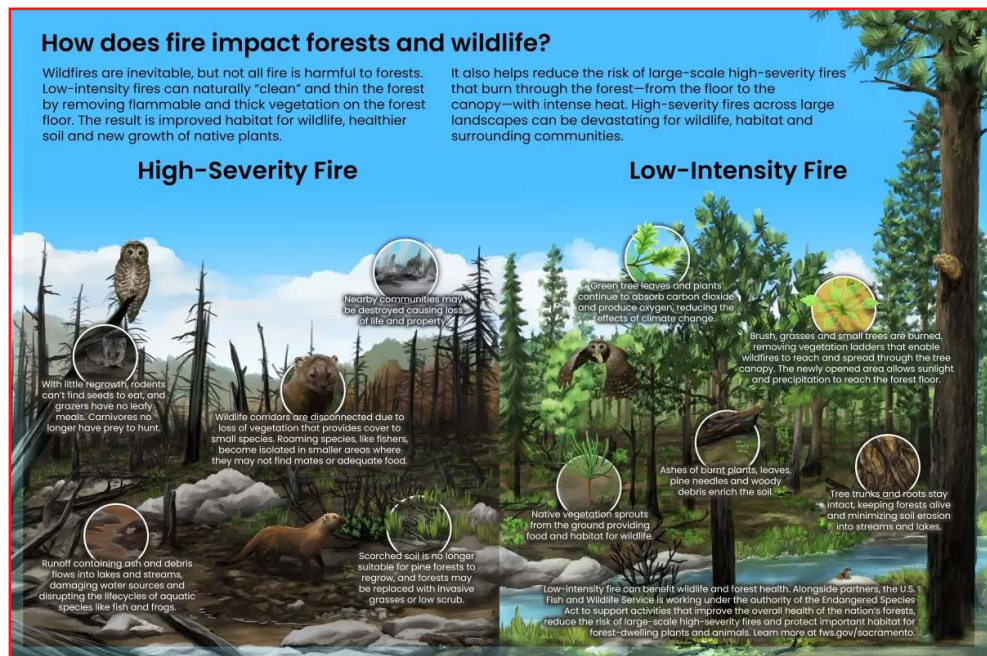
Relief to Uttarakhand from Wildfires

Why in News?

Recently, **Rainfall has provided relief** from the continuous **forest fires** in areas such as **Pauri and Nainital of Uttarakhand.**

Key Points

- Despite the current temperatures being lower by two to three degrees, the residents are advised to **remove dried shrubs** around their homes to **avoid fires from spreading.**
 - The **unusually high temperatures** this season have accelerated the spread of forest fires.
- Over the past six months, **Uttarakhand has witnessed more than 1,100 fire incidents, destroying over 1,500 hectares of forest land.**



Government Initiatives on Forest Fire

- **National Action Plan for Forest Fires (NAPFF)**, was started in 2018 with the goal of reducing forest fires by informing, enabling, and empowering forest fringe communities and incentivising them to collaborate with state forest departments.
- **The Forest Fire Prevention and Management Scheme (FPM)** is the only government-sponsored programme dedicated to assisting states in dealing with forest fires.

Note:

3rd Indian Analytical Congress (IAC) in Dehradun

Why in News?

Recently, the **3rd Indian Analytical Congress (IAC)** was inaugurated at the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-Indian Institute of Petroleum (CSIR-IIP) in Dehradun, Uttarakhand.

- It is a **three-day International Conference cum Exhibition IAC-2024** being jointly organised by CSIR-IIP and the Indian Society of Analytical Scientists (ISAS-Delhi Chapter).

Key Points

- The theme of the conference is: **“Role of Science and Technology in Green Transitions”**.
- The conference **will provide a platform for industries, academia, scientists, and technologists in the Analytical Sciences** to present the prevalent and upcoming solutions in this area.
 - The conference shall **witness five technical sessions** comprising invited talks by eminent speakers, presentations by researchers, and special and plenary sessions.

Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)

- **About:** **CSIR** is the largest research and development (R&D) organisation in India. CSIR has a pan-India presence and has a dynamic network of 37 national laboratories, 39 outreach centres, 3 Innovation Complexes and 5 units.
 - CSIR is **funded by the Ministry of Science and Technology** and it operates as an **autonomous body through the Societies Registration Act, 1860**.
 - **CSIR covers a wide spectrum of streams** – from radio and space physics, oceanography, geophysics, chemicals, drugs, genomics, biotechnology and nanotechnology to mining, aeronautics, instrumentation, environmental engineering and information technology.
 - It **provides significant technological intervention in many areas with regard to societal efforts** which include the environment, health, drinking water, food, housing, energy, and farm and non-farm sectors.
- **Established:** September 1942
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi

World Environment Day

Why in News?

World Environment Day is celebrated on **5th June every year** to encourage awareness and environmental protection.

Key Points

- Recently, in a remarkable initiative to combat deforestation two environmentalists, Jai Dhar Gupta and Vijay Dhasmana **created India’s first biosphere in a tiger reserve**, called the **Rajaji Raghathi Biosphere (RRB)** within the **Rajaji National Park** in Uttarakhand.
- The biosphere is a 35-acre private forest initiative **aimed at identifying and reviving rare and endangered species** of native trees while protecting the area from poachers and mining.
 - The land earmarked for RRB **was previously barren and in a state of degradation**.
- They are also **developing a second biosphere** above the Koyna River in the buffer zone of the Sahyadri Tiger Reserve near Pune, Maharashtra, along the **Western Ghats**.

World Environment Day

- **About:**
 - The **United Nations Assembly** established World Environment Day in 1972, which was the first day of the **Stockholm Conference** on the human environment.
 - World Environment Day (WED) is **celebrated every year with a specific theme and slogan** that focuses on the major environmental issues of that time.
 - WED 2024 is **hosted by Saudi Arabia**.
 - India hosted the 45th celebration of World Environment Day in 2018 under the **theme ‘Beat Plastic Pollution’**.
 - WED celebration in 2021 kicked off the **UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030)** which is a global mission to revive billions of hectares, from forests to farmlands, from the top of mountains to the depth of the seas.
- The Theme for 2024:
 - Land Restoration, Desertification and Drought Resilience
 - Year 2024 also marks the **30th anniversary of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)**.

Note:



Sahastra Tal Trek

Why in News?

In Uttarakhand, **nine trekkers** from Karnataka **died near the Sahastra Tal** in Uttarakhand.

- These trekkers, part of a 22-member group, died after losing their way due to bad weather while on their way back from Sahastra Tal.

Key Points

- The state government is in touch with the **rescue operations team**, and the families of the deceased are informed.
- Sahastra Tal Trek:
 - It is a high-altitude trail at 15,000 feet located in **Uttarakhand's Uttarkashi district**.
 - The trek is surrounded on both sides by: **the Bhagirathi Valley on the west** and the **Bhilangana Valley on the east**.
 - The **Kush Kalyan Plateau**, surrounded by small lakes, is located north of the lake. Locals perform an **annual ritual of carrying their god around the lake** as they believe it to be auspicious.

Dehradun Litchis Hit by Heat

Why in News?

The extreme heat in **Uttarakhand**, with temperatures exceeding **42 °C**, has caused **litchis** to **dry out** and **suffer damage** from **cracking**.

Key Points

- The rise in heat waves has affected the fruit's overall growth and maturation.
- **Litchi trees** takes **water from the soil**, **aiding in seed growth and aril development**.
- The tubercell's **red skin has been exposed to heat and cracked**, it has caused a **decrease in cell elasticity**, **impacting the fruit's juiciness, size, and succulence**.
- Ramnagar litchi, recognized with a **Geographical Indication (GI)** certificate, **is in high demand** in nearby states like **Chandigarh, Delhi, and Haryana**.
- **Pomologists** caution against harvesting litchis too soon because litchis from Bihar enter the market before those from Uttarakhand.



- Picking them early may result in the presence of tart and undersized litchi.
- To enhance the flexibility of the young litchi fruits left on the trees, it is recommended to water them in the morning and evening while also using boron and **gibberellic acid**.

Litchi

- **Botanical Classification:** Litchi belongs to the Sapindaceae family and is known for its delicious, juicy, translucent aril or edible flesh.
- **Climatic Requirements:** Litchi thrives in **sub-tropical climates and prefers moist conditions**. It grows best in regions with low elevation, up to an altitude of around 800 meters.
- **Soil Preference:** The ideal soil for litchi cultivation is **deep, well-drained loamy soil** rich in organic matter.
- **Temperature Sensitivity:** Litchi is sensitive to extreme temperatures. It does not tolerate temperatures above **40.5°C** in summer or freezing temperatures in winter.
- **Rainfall Impact:** Prolonged rain, especially during flowering, can interfere with pollination and affect the crop adversely.

Forest Fires a Concern for India

Why in News?

Forest patches in **Uttarakhand** and Himachal Pradesh **burned due to rising temperatures** from April, causing **damage to properties, loss of wildlife**, and prolonged smoke in tourist areas.

Note:



Key Points

- According to data collected by the **MODIS (Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer)** sensor fitted onto **NASA's (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) Aqua and Terra satellites**, **Uttarakhand was the hardest hit** by **forest fires** this season (November 2023 to June 2024).
 - **Odisha ranked second** with 1,866 fire incidents, **Andhra Pradesh came third** with 1,788 fires, Maharashtra had 1,493, and Chhattisgarh reported 1,330 fires in forest areas.
- In Uttarakhand, the highest number and most intense fires were noted in **Nainital, Champawat, and Udham Singh Nagar districts** in the southwestern part.
 - The **Uttarakhand Forest Department** had **suffered revenue losses** worth more than Rs 25 lakh due to the blaze.
 - The state government has announced plans to file cases against persons found setting the grazing area in forests ablaze.
- As per the **Forest Survey of India**, 54.4% of India's forests are exposed to occasional fires, 7.4% to moderately frequent fires, and 2.4% to high incidence levels.

Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer (MODIS)

- Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer is a key instrument aboard the **Terra (originally known as EOS AM-1) and Aqua (originally known as EOS PM-1) satellites**.
 - Terra's orbit around the Earth is timed so that it passes from north to south across the equator in the morning, while Aqua passes south to north over the equator in the afternoon.
- Terra MODIS and Aqua MODIS are **viewing the entire Earth's surface every 1 to 2 days**, acquiring data in 36 spectral bands, or groups of wavelengths.
- These data will improve our understanding of global dynamics and processes occurring on the land, in the oceans, and in the lower atmosphere.
- The primary goal of the Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer is to gather information about the Earth's climate and environment, including measurements of various atmospheric, land surface, and oceanic parameters.

Bharat Gaurav Express

Why in News?

The Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC), in collaboration with the **Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board**, has launched online ticket reservations for the **Bharat Gaurav Express** train from Tamil Nadu to six spiritual destinations in Uttarakhand.

Key Points

- The six spiritual destinations are: **Rishikesh, Rudraprayag, Guptkashi, Kedarnath, Joshimath, and Badrinath**.
 - The journey spans over 13 days and includes a helicopter transfer from Guptkashi to Kedarnath.
- **Kedarnath Dham** is located in **Rudraprayag district**. It is **dedicated to Lord Shiva** and situated on the bank of the **Mandakini River**. It is one of the **12 Jyotirlingas** (divine representations of Lord Shiva) in India.
- **Badrinath Dham** is located in **Chamoli district**. It is home to the sacred Badrinarayan Temple, **dedicated to Lord Vishnu**.
- **Rudraprayag** is one of the **Panch Prayag of Alaknanda River**, the point of confluence of rivers **Alaknanda and Mandakini**.
 - It is **named after Rudra, an aspect of Lord Shiva**. According to a legend, Lord Shiva appeared here as 'Rudra' to bless Narad Muni.
- **Joshimath** is a hilly town located on the Rishikesh-Badrinath National Highway (NH-7) in **Chamoli district** of Uttarakhand.
 - The city serves as a tourist town as it acts as an **overnight rest stop** for people visiting **Badrinath, Auli, Valley of Flowers, and Hemkund Sahib**, among other important religious and tourist locations in the state.
- **Guptkashi** is located in the **Rudraprayag district**. It is known for its ancient Vishwanath Temple dedicated to the god Shiva, which is similar to the one in Varanasi.
- **Rishikesh** is located in the Dehradun district. It is commonly referred to as the '**yoga capital of the world**'.
 - It is situated on the **right bank of the Ganges River** and is a pilgrimage town for Hindus, with ancient sages and saints meditating there in search of higher knowledge.

Note:



Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board (UTDB)

- It is a government body responsible for promoting tourism in the state of Uttarakhand.
- It was **established in 1976** and is **headquartered in Dehradun**.
- The UTDB works to develop and **promote tourism infrastructure, attract investment, and market Uttarakhand** as a tourist destination.

'Home of the Himalayas' Initiative

Why in News?

Recently, the Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board (UTDB) has **partnered with Prime Focus Technologies (PFT)** to bolster tourism promotion of the **picturesque Adi Kailash & Om Parvat**. PFT is renowned for its AI prowess and exceptional media services.

- The partnership aims to create videos of the region **under the 'Home of the Himalayas' initiative**.

Key Points

- The collaboration between UTDB and PFT is **expected to give an impetus to position Uttarakhand as a global tourism hotspot**, showcasing its diverse landscapes, rich heritage, and unique tourism experiences.
- The "Home of the Himalayas" initiative, coined by PFT, **focuses on two key areas**:
 - refreshing Uttarakhand Tourism brand identity
 - creating high-quality content to promote tourism.
- The 'Home of the Himalayas' initiative marks a transformative milestone in Uttarakhand's journey towards global recognition.

Adi Kailash & Om Parvat

- Adi Kailash is known as **Shiva Kailash, Chota Kailash, Baba Kailash or Jonglingkong Peak**, is a mountain located in the Himalayan mountain range in the Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand.
- Om Parvat is also a **part of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra**, a pilgrimage that includes visiting Mount Kailash and Lake Mansarovar in Tibet.
- The revered mountains of Adi Kailash & OM Parvat are **located on Indo-China border in the Pithoragarh District of Uttarakhand**.

- Both **peaks bear significant religious importance for devotees of Lord Shiva**.

Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary

Why in News?

Recently, four Uttarakhand forest department staffers died and four others were injured **when the team was caught up in a raging forest fire in Almora district's Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary**.

Key Points

- Uttarakhand has reported **1,213 forest fire incidents from November 1, 2023, to June 14, 2024**, compared to 663 incidents reported during the corresponding period in 2023.
 - **Of 1653 hectares of forest land damaged in forest fires this year**, 687 hectares have been damaged in Garhwal region, 833 hectares in Kumaon region and 132 hectares in wildlife administrative regions.
- The **Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary is located in the Kumaon Himalayas** of Uttarakhand.
 - In 1988, the sanctuary was established with the aim of conserving the rich biodiversity of the region.
 - It boasts a **remarkable variety of flora due to its diverse topography and altitudinal variation**. The sanctuary is primarily covered with dense forest of oak and pine.
 - The sanctuary is **also home to an impressive array of wildlife**. The sanctuary **boasts over 200 species of birds**.
 - They **include species such as** the Eurasian jay, koklass pheasant, monal pheasant, and Himalayan woodpecker.

Renaming of Joshimath & Kosiyakutoli

Why in News?

Recently, the Centre **approved the Uttarakhand government's proposal for renaming** the **Joshimath** tehsil in Chamoli district to **Jyotirmath**, and the Kosiyakutoli tehsil in Nainital district to **Pargana Shri Kainchi Dham** tehsil.

Note:

- This step will enhance the religious and cultural significance of these areas, in a state that is already a major destination for religious tourism.

Key Points

- Joshimath was in the news in 2023 **after massive cracks developed in many of the town's roads** and hundreds of buildings due to land subsidence.
 - On the other hand, the **Kosiyakutoli tehsil is well-known for Neem Karoli Baba's Kainchi Dham Ashram.**
- Jyotirmath (also known as Jyotir Peeth) is **one of the four cardinal mathas** (monasteries) that 8th-century philosopher **Adi Shankaracharya is believed to have established across India** to promote the Advaita Vedanta philosophy.
 - The Jyotirmath was **established for the preservation and dissemination of spiritual knowledge and practices.**
- Jyotirmath was the hill town's ancient name. Over time, the local population began referring to the area as "Joshimath". This **change was likely gradual and organic, influenced by regional languages**, local dialects and the ease of pronunciation. The transition reflects a linguistic and cultural evolution rather than a specific historical event.
- In recent years, **some residents have demanded a change in the name to honour the town's historical and religious importance.**
 - Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami announced the change during a programme organised in Chamoli in 2023.
- While Joshimath represents a subtle change from an older name, **the case of Kosiyakutoli is about changing a lesser-known name that lacks wider recognition.**
 - Renaming it to Pargana Shri Kainchi Dham **aligns its identity with Neem Karoli Baba's Kainchi Dham Ashram**, which is a major site here that attracts devotees from across the world.
- In the name "Kosiyakutoli", **"Kosi" refers to the river of the same name which flows through the Nainital district** and is important for the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand. Along with adding to the scenic beauty, it matters to the local ecology and economy.
- The term "kutoli" is derived from the local language, **referring to a village or settlement.** In the Kumaoni language, naming a place after a prominent geographical

feature **like a river is common practice and the names often have meanings connected** to the landscape, local history, or cultural attributes.

Action Plan to Make Champawat Model District

Why in News?

Recently, Uttarakhand CM Pushkar Singh Dhami reviewed the **action plan** and ongoing works to make **Champawat district an ideal district at the Secretariat.**

- Champawat district is being taken as a model district to make Uttarakhand an ideal state.

Key Points

- Champawat has **diverse geographical conditions** including **plains, terai, bhabar**, and mountainous areas.
- The Chief Minister urged officials to swiftly implement the action plan for **Adarsh Janpad Champawat**, emphasizing the importance of advancing both **development and heritage.**
 - He also instructed officials to **coordinate development work with ecological and environmental concerns.** Preservation of natural heritage should be integrated into development efforts.
 - Champawat district offers numerous opportunities for **religious, spiritual, and adventure tourism.**
- It is important to create three to four-day travel circuits to accommodate the needs of devotees and tourists visiting the district.
 - **Purnagiri temple** attracts a large number of devotees, so it is crucial to make necessary arrangements to ensure their convenience.
- An action plan is being developed to promote **tourism, agriculture, horticulture, healthcare, education, milk**, and related products in Champawat district. The goal is to make Champawat an ideal state, with plans in place until 2030.
- Efforts are being made to ensure that every eligible person in the Champawat district benefits from **public welfare schemes of the Central and State Government.**
- Special attention is given to exploring possibilities in **solar energy.** Additionally, there is a focus on addressing the increasing migration from rural to urban areas by giving special attention to town planning.

Note:

Purnagiri Temple

- Purnagiri is also known as Punyagiri. This temple is **situated near the Sharda River. Purnagiri temple is also well known for its miracles.**
- Maa Purnagiri Temple is **situated at an altitude of about 3000 meters on the top of Annapurna Chhoti** in the **mountainous region of Tanakpur in Champawat district** of Uttarakhand.
- The temple is considered a **Shaktipeeth** and is **one of the 108 Siddhapeeths**. It is **believed that the navel of Sati Mata had fallen at this place.**

Crowd Eye Device

Why in News?

Recently, **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee** has developed a '**Crowd Eye**' device to **manage increasing pilgrim footfall** at the **Char Dham shrines** by sending alerts before the crowd increases.

- On the experimental grounds, preparations are being made to install the **first Crowd Eye device** in **Yamunotri**.

Key Points

- This device is designed for **real-time monitoring of religious places** to manage crowds.
- A funding request has been submitted to **Uttarakhand State Council for Science and Technology (UCOST)** in Dehradun for installing a locally developed 'Crowd Eye' device in Yamunotri.
 - The project will start after budget approval, with production cost estimated at 60 to 70 thousand rupees. Efforts are also being made to **patent** this technology.
- Future updates aim to differentiate between male and female data within crowd counts.
- Surveys at **Deen Dayal Upadhyay and Pantdweep parking areas in Haridwar** are addressing traffic congestion during the pilgrimage season.

Char Dham Yatra

- **Yamunotri Dham:**
 - Location: **Uttarkashi district**.
 - Dedicated to: **Goddess Yamuna**.
 - River Yamuna is the second-most sacred river in India after River Ganga.

➤ Gangotri Dham:

- Location: **Uttarkashi district**.
- Dedicated to: **Goddess Ganga**.
- Considered the most sacred of all Indian rivers.

➤ Kedarnath Dham:

- Location: **Rudraprayag district**.
- Dedicated to: **Lord Shiva**.
- Situated on the bank of the **Mandakini River**.
- One of the **12 Jyotirlingas** (divine representations of Lord Shiva) in India.

➤ Badrinath Dham:

- Location: **Chamoli district**.
- Home to the sacred **Badrinarayan Temple**.
- Dedicated to: **Lord Vishnu**.
- One of the holy shrines for Vaishnavites.

Mines Surveillance System

Why in News?

Recently, The Uttarakhand government approved a Rs 93-crore proposal for the installation of **Mining Digital Transformation and Surveillance System (MDTSS)**, across the state to curb **illegal mining**.

Key Points

- The systems will be installed at 40 check gates across **Dehradun, Haridwar, Nainital, and Udham Singh Nagar**.
- The new system equipped with **bullet cameras, Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) radars, and Light Emitting Diodes (LED) floodlights** will not only **help monitor illegal mining activities** but also **boost the state government's revenue**.
- A **Mining State Control Centre (MSCC)** will be set up in Dehradun, along with mini command centres at district headquarters in Dehradun, Haridwar, Nainital, and Udham Singh Nagar.

Illegal Mining

➤ About:

- Illegal mining is the extraction of minerals, ores, or other valuable resources from land or water bodies **without the necessary permits, licenses, or regulatory approvals** from government authorities.
- It can also involve the violation of environmental, labor, and safety standards.

Note:

➤ Issues:

- **Environmental Degradation:**
 - It can lead to deforestation, soil erosion, and water pollution and can result in the **destruction of habitats for wildlife**, which can have serious ecological consequences.
- **Hazards:**
 - Illegal mining often involves the **use of hazardous chemicals such as mercury and cyanide**, which can pose serious **health risks to miners** and nearby communities.
- **Loss of Revenue:**
- It can lead to a **loss of revenue for governments** as miners may not pay appropriate taxes and royalties.
- This can have significant economic impacts, particularly in countries where natural resources are a major source of revenue.
- **Human Rights Violations:**
 - Illegal mining can also result in **human rights violations**, including forced labor, child labor, and exploitation of vulnerable populations.

Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) radars

- RFID is a **type of passive wireless technology** that allows for tracking or matching of an item or individual.
- The system has two basic parts: Tags and Readers.
 - The **reader gives off radio waves and gets signals back from the RFID tag**, while the **tag uses radio waves to communicate** its identity and other information.
 - A **tag can be read from up to several feet away** and does not need to be within the direct line-of-sight of the reader to be tracked.
- The technology has been **approved since before the 1970s** but has become much more **prevalent in recent years** due to its usages in things like global supply chain management and pet microchipping.

Special Tourist Train

Why in News?

According to the sources, The **Uttarakhand Tourism Department** has partnered with **Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC)** to operate a dedicated **tourist train** bound for **south India**.

Key Points

- The unique train approved by the Central government, called **Kedar Badri Kartik (Murugan) Koil Yathirai**, will commence its inaugural journey with **165 travelers from Madurai in Tamil Nadu to Rishikesh**.
- All 165 passengers boarding the train have been given **special tour packages for 12 days and nights**.
 - It includes visits to the newly found tourist place **Kartik Swami Temple** in **Rudraprayag, Badrinath, and Kedarnath**.
 - The tour package includes complete lodging and boarding facilities for the tourists.
- The Uttarakhand Tourism aims at attracting more pilgrims from the south, especially Chennai, to associate them with Kartik Swami Temple, a newly developed important tourist destination in Rudraprayag district.
 - According to the belief **lord Kartikeya**, son of Shiva, came here with his parents and **handed out his bones to the father and flesh to the mother**.
 - It's said **these bones are present in the temple**. In north India, this is the **lone temple of lord Kartikeya**, known as the **deity Murugan** in South India.
- The Uttarakhand Tourism Department has collaborated with IRCTC to operate special trains from various regions of India, particularly Western and South India.
 - Two such special trains called **Manaskhand Express** were launched from Pune in March and April, 2024 to **attract tourists from Maharashtra and other states** in the west to the **Kumaon regions**.

Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC)

- It is a **Mini Ratna Category-I (conferred in 2008) Central Public Sector Enterprise** that is wholly-owned by and is under the administrative control of the **Ministry of Railways**.
- It is a registered enterprise and its corporate office is situated at New Delhi.
- IRCTC was incorporated in September **1999** as an extended arm of the Indian Railways to upgrade, professionalize and manage the **catering and hospitality services at stations**, on trains and other locations.
- The firm currently operates in 4 business segments namely, **Internet ticketing, Catering, Packaging Drinking Water, and Travel and Tourism**.

Note:

- It is the only entity that is authorized by Indian Railways to provide catering services to railways, online railway tickets and packaged drinking water at railway stations and trains in the country.
 - This gives it advantages in increasing market share in e-ticketing, packaged drinking water, and in e-catering.

Uttarakhand High Court Issued Contempt Notice

Why in News?

Recently, The **Uttarakhand high court** has issued a **contempt notice** to the **director of school education** for not following its orders to provide a **higher pay scale to lecturers and assistant teachers with 10 years of service**.

Key Points

- According to a previous order, the High Court had instructed that lecturers and assistant teachers **should receive extra increments along with selection and promotion pay scales**.
 - The **government** is still deliberating on the issue and has **not reached a final decision**.
- The lecturers who were appointed in 2011 argued that they should receive an extra increment and selection pay scale as per the **Uttarakhand Government Servant Pay Rules, 2016**, after completing ten years of service.
 - The government did grant the selection pay scale after a decade but did not provide the additional increment as expected.

Contempt of Court

- **About:**
 - Contempt of court seeks to protect judicial institutions from **motivated attacks and unwarranted criticism**, and as a legal mechanism to punish those who lower its authority.
- **Statutory Basis:**
 - When the Constitution was adopted, contempt of court was made one of the restrictions on freedom of speech and expression under **Article 19 (2) of the Constitution of India**.
 - Separately, **Article 129 of the Constitution conferred on the Supreme Court the power to punish contempt of itself**. Article 215 conferred a corresponding power on the High Courts.

- The **Contempt of Courts Act, 1971**, gives statutory backing to the idea.
- Kinds of Contempt of Court:
 - **Civil Contempt:** It is the **wilful disobedience** to any judgment, decree, direction, order, **writ** or other process of a court or wilful breach of an undertaking given to a court.
 - **Criminal Contempt:** It is the publication of any matter or the doing of any other act which **scandalises or lowers the authority of any court**, or interferes with the due course of any judicial proceeding, or obstructs the administration of justice in any other manner.
- Punishment:
 - The Contempt of Court Act of 1971 punishes the guilty with imprisonment that may extend to **six months or fine of Rs 2,000 or both**.
 - It was amended in 2006 to include **“truth and good faith” as a defence**.
 - It was added that the court may impose punishments only if the act of the other person substantially interferes, or tends to interfere with the due course of justice.

Amendment in Uttarakhand Tourism Policy

Why in News?

Recently, The Uttarakhand cabinet approved an amendment in the **state's 2018 tourism policy**, specifying the period during which different industries will get **State Goods and Services Tax (SGST)** compensations.

Key Points

- According to the amendment, **A, B and B+ category industries** in Uttarakhand will get 100% SGST compensation for five years, after which they will get it at the **rate of 90, 75 and 75%** respectively for the next five years.
 - **Large, mega and ultra-mega projects** will get an SGST compensation of 30 and 50% respectively for 10 years.
- The **Uttarakhand Tourism Policy 2018** aimed to establish a **single-window clearance system** for investors in the sector.

Note:

- However, the period for providing SGST compensation to various industries in the state was not specified.
- The state cabinet also decided to:
 - **Extend the service period of specialist doctors** till they attain the age of 65 years.
 - Introduce a **Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority Bill, 2024** in the state Assembly for the development, operation and maintenance of the urban transport system.
 - Amend the cooperative committee rules, **reserving 33% posts** in its management committees **for women**.
 - Relocate the families living around **the Mahasu Devta temple**.

Mahasu Devta Temple

- It is located on the **Tyuni-Mori road at Hanol, Dehradun district**, Uttarakhand and was built in the 9th century.
- The temple is dedicated to **Mahasu Devta**. It was constructed in the **Kath-Kuni or Koti-Banal style of architecture**.
- It is included in the **Archaeological Survey of India's** list of the ancient temples in the Dehradun circle, Uttarakhand.

Adi Kailash, Om Parvat Yatras Suspended for Monsoon

Why in News?

According to the officials, the **Pilgrimages to Adi Kailash and Om Parvat** in Uttarakhand's **Pithoragarh district** will be **temporarily suspended from 25th June 2024**.

Key Points

- The yatras were temporarily suspended due to the fear of **monsoon disrupting pilgrimages** to high-altitude sites. Yatra **bookings will resume in September 2024**.

Adi Kailash & Om Parvat

- Adi Kailash is known as **Shiva Kailash, Chota Kailash, Baba Kailash or Jonglingkong Peak**, is a mountain located in the **Himalayan mountain range** in the Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand.
- Om Parvat is also a **part of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra**, a pilgrimage that includes visiting Mount Kailash and Lake Mansarovar in Tibet.



- The revered mountains of Adi Kailash & OM Parvat are **located on Indo-China border** in the **Pithoragarh District of Uttarakhand**.
- Both **peaks bear significant religious importance for devotees of Lord Shiva**.

Khalanga Reserve Forest

Why in News?

Recently, Local residents of **Dehradun** united to **save 2,000 Sal trees** in **Khalanga Reserve Forest**. Due to public protest against tree felling, the state government will **relocate the planned drinking water plant** from the forest.

Key Points

- Environmental activists **protested the marking of 2000 Sal trees** in **Khalanga Reserve Forest** for the **Song Dam drinking water project**, causing deep annoyance among locals who started protesting against the project.
- A social media **campaign was launched to spread awareness** and some groups tied Raksha-Sutras to the trees for protection.
- A drinking water project worth Rs. 524 crores will be built under the **Song Dam project** in Dehradun, with an estimated total cost of 3000 crores.
 - The **project includes the construction of a reservoir** near the Song Dam and a 150 MLD (Megaliters Per Day) **water treatment plant on 4.2 hectares of land**.
 - The project aims to **supply drinking water to 60 wards of the capital from Kanar village**, ultimately helping Dehradun's 60 wards.

Note:

Sal Tree

- ***Shorea robusta***, the sal tree, is a **species of tree in the family Dipterocarpaceae**.
- The tree is **native to India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Tibet and across the Himalayan regions**.
- Description
 - It can **grow up to 40 metres tall with a trunk diameter of 2 metres**.
 - The leaves are **10–25 cm long and 5–15 cm broad**.
 - In **wetter areas**, sal is **evergreen**; in **drier areas**, it is **dry-season deciduous**, shedding most of the leaves from February to April, leafing out again in April and May.
 - The sal tree is **known also as sakhua in northern India**, including Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and Jharkhand.
 - It is the **state tree of two Indian states – Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand**.
- Culture
 - In Hindu tradition, the **sal tree is sacred**. It is also **associated with Lord Vishnu**.
 - The tree's common name, sal, comes from the word shala, which **means 'rampart' in Sanskrit**.
 - Jains state that the **24th tirthankara, Mahavir**, achieved **enlightenment under a sal tree**.
 - Some cultures in **Bengal worship Sarna Burhi**, a goddess **associated with sacred groves of Sal trees**.
 - Buddhist tradition holds that **Queen Māyā of Sakya gave birth to Gautama Buddha while grasping the branch of a sal tree or an Ashoka tree** in a garden in Lumbini in south Nepal.
 - Also according to Buddhist tradition, the **Buddha was lying between a pair of sal trees when he died**.



Risk Posed by 13 Glacial Lakes During Monsoon

Why in News?

The **Uttarakhand State Disaster Management Department (USDMA)** is going to do a vulnerability study of the **13 glacial lakes, five of them in "high risk zone"**.

- The study aims to provide **data to help avoid calamities such as lake outbursts**.

Key Points

- According to the officials, the **Himalayan glaciers** are in danger due to **climate change**, and that this requires continued checks to ensure nothing untoward happens.
 - **13 high-risk lakes** are located in **Darma, Lasaryanghati, and Kutiyangti valley in Pithoragarh district, and Vasudhara Tal lake in Chamoli district**.
 - They range from 0.02 to 0.50 sq. km in size and are situated at elevations above 4,000 meters above sea level.
- In March 2024, the State government had formed two expert teams to assess the risks associated with these glacial lakes.
- The teams were composed of experts from the **Indian Institute of Remote Sensing**, the **Geological Survey of India**, the **National Institute of Hydrology, Roorkee**, the **Centre for Development of Advanced Computing**, and the **Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology**.

Note:

Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF)

➤ **About:**

- A **glacial lake outburst flood (GLOF)** is a type of catastrophic flood that occurs when the **dam containing a glacial lake fails**, releasing a large volume of water.
- This type of flood is **typically caused by rapid melting of glaciers or the buildup of water** in the lake due to heavy precipitation or the inflow of meltwater.
 - In February 2021, **Chamoli district in Uttarakhand witnessed flash floods** which are **suspected to have been caused by GLOFs**.

➤ **Causes:**

- These floods can be triggered by a number of factors, including **changes in the volume of the glacier**, changes in the **water level of the lake**, and **earthquakes**.
- According to **NDMA (National Disaster Management Authority)**, **glacial retreat due to climate change** occurring in most parts of the **Hindu Kush Himalayas** has given rise to the formation of numerous new glacial lakes, which are the major cause of GLOFs.



drishti

Note:



drishti

Key Points

Details

Blank area for Key Points.

Lined area for Details.

Summary

Blank area for Summary.

