



Lackadaisical Approach: Uttarakhand Forest Fires | Uttarakhand | 16 May 2024

Why in News?

Recently, the **Supreme Court** sought an explanation from the Uttarakhand government on why **central funds** were not utilized for dousing fires.

Key Points

- The SC summoned the **Uttarakhand chief secretary** to appear before it on 17th May over the '**lackadaisical**' approach shown by the Uttarakhand government in tackling fires.
- The top court directed that no state shall deploy forest officials or forest department vehicles for poll duty.
- The chief secretary has also been asked to explain large vacancies in the forest department, lack of fire fighting equipment, and deployment of forest officials despite specific exemption granted by the [Election Commission](#).
- The bench headed by **Justice BR Gavai** and also comprising **Justices SVN Bhatti** and **Sandeep Mehta**, observed that though multiple action plans are prepared, no steps are taken for their implementation.
 - **1,300 hectares of land** were affected due to the forest fires.
- Uttarakhand chief minister **Pushkar Singh Dhimi** had launched the [Pirul Lao-Paise Pao Mission](#).
 - Under this campaign, to prevent forest fires, the **Pirul** (leaves from the Pine Tree) lying in the forest will be collected by the local villagers and youth, weighed, and then stored at the designated **Pirul Collection Centre**.

Char Dham Yatra | Uttarakhand | 16 May 2024

Why in News?

Recently, the alarming scenes of a massive turnout at **Yamunotri** and long traffic blockades on the **Kedarnath** and **Badrinath** routes have forced the government to prioritize short-term and long-term solutions for the Char Dham yatra.

Key Points

- The [Char-Dham yatra](#) in Uttarakhand consists of visiting four temples, **Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri, and Yamunotri**.
- It holds profound spiritual significance in Hinduism. This journey typically occurs from **April/May to October/November**.
- The state is planning to create a "**Dharmik Yatra Authority**" that would regulate not only **Char**

Dham yatra but also other pilgrimages like the **Kanwar yatra**.

- The authority will take a call on all issues, like deciding the number of **daily pilgrims, routes, health, and security deployments**, and all other arrangements.
- Uttarakhand is considering adopting the regulatory body for religious events similar to the one in Uttar Pradesh and will study its model before implementation.

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.

