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## Uttarakhand's Valley of Flowers | Uttarakhand | 31 May 2024

### Why in News?

The Valley of Flowers trek in Uttarakhand will open on 1st June 2024. It is located within Uttarakhand's [Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve](#), a [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization \(UNESCO\) World Heritage Site](#) since 2005.

### Key Points

- The Valley of Flowers National Park awaits trekkers with over **300 flower species indigenous to the Himalayas**, accessible during the **monsoon season from June to November**.
  - The early signs of spring with blooming potentilla, wild rose, and primrose mark the beginning of the season as the snow starts to melt.
- It includes a wide variety of floral species, **surpassing 300 types, like anemones, geraniums, blue poppies, and bluebells**.
- It is home to rare animal species such as the [grey langur](#), [flying squirrel](#), [Himalayan weasel](#), black bear, **red fox, lime butterfly**, [snow leopard](#), and [Himalayan monal](#).

### Biosphere Reserve

- Biosphere Reserve (BR) is an international designation by the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** for representative parts of natural and cultural landscapes **extending over large areas of terrestrial or coastal/marine ecosystems** or a combination of both.
- Biosphere Reserves **tries to balance economic and social development** and maintenance of associated cultural values along with the preservation of nature.
- Biosphere Reserves are thus special environments for both people and nature and are **living examples of how human beings and nature can co-exist** while respecting each other's needs.

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## Horticulture Yield Declining in Uttarakhand | Uttarakhand | 31 May 2024

### Why in News?

In 2023, **extreme weather events in Uttarakhand** resulted in the **loss of 44,882 hectares of farmlands**. As **agricultural opportunities diminish**, many **people are migrating** from the hills to the plains, potentially **causing a decrease** in the area dedicated to [horticultural production](#).

### Key Points

- The **variations in the area of fruit production** in Uttarakhand between 2016-17 and 2022-23 reveal striking shifts in cultivation patterns across different fruit types.
  - The increase in guava and gooseberry cultivation indicates a shift in focus towards fruit types better attuned to market demand or local conditions.
  - The yields of pear, peach, apricot, plum, walnut and apple have markedly decreased in the last seven years due to the significant impact of global warming on Uttarakhand's horticulture.
- **Uttarakhand has experienced frequent disasters** such as heavy rainfall, floods, hailstorms, and landslides, leading to substantial destruction of agricultural lands and crops.
  - The increasing temperatures are adversely affecting the cultivation of winter fruits, prompting farmers to switch to tropical options.
- According to [Indian Council of Agricultural Research \(ICAR\)-Indian Agricultural Research Institute \(IARI\)](#), the short-term variability and trends in temperature are worrying and there is a need to study the long-term trends in weather variables and its relation to yield, especially, its relation with any change in crop/cropping pattern or shift in crop/cropping pattern.

## Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)

- It was established on **16 July 1929** as a **registered society** under the **Societies Registration Act, 1860**.
- It is an **autonomous organisation** under the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE), **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**, Government of India.
- It is **headquartered at New Delhi**. With 102 ICAR institutes and 71 agricultural universities spread across the country this is one of the largest national agricultural systems in the world.
- It is the **apex body** for coordinating, guiding and managing research and education in agriculture including horticulture, fisheries and animal sciences in the entire country

## Dual-Language Books to Students in Uttarakhand | Uttarakhand | 31 May 2024

### Why in News?

In a first-of-its-kind initiative in the country, the **Uttarakhand government** will provide **dual-language science books to students** from the **current academic session**.

### Key Points

- According to the state education department, the **books prepared and printed in dual languages have been delivered to all the state-run schools** ahead of the commencement of the academic year.
- These books are **not published separately in Hindi or English languages**; instead, **each piece follows the same syllabus and carries lessons on adjacent pages in both languages**.
  - While there will be one dual-language book of sciences for sixth to eighth standards, there will be three separate books for physics, chemistry, and biology for senior secondary classes.
- **800 select Uttarakhand government schools** will soon have **two smart classes each**. All **1,600 smart classes will be interconnected through wires**.
  - The schools will be equipped with **hi-tech digital equipment**, including big screens, online 3D education modules, high-fidelity internet services, and a host of other techniques

and gazettes.

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