



## Chief Secretary Visit to Rakhigarhi | Haryana | 08 Jan 2025

Why in News?

Recently, [The Chief Secretary](#) of Haryana visited [the iconic Harappan site of Rakhigarhi](#) and observed [the Archaeological Survey of India \(ASI\)](#) conducting the ongoing excavation in the district.

### Key Points

- **Directives and Observations at Rakhigarhi:**
  - **Relocation of Families:**
    - The Chief Secretary directed district officials to ensure the **smooth relocation of families residing in protected areas** to government-built houses for their rehabilitation.
    - Officials were also instructed to **remove all encroachments on the site** to preserve its integrity.
  - **Site Exploration and Inspections:**
    - He explored excavation sites, including mound numbers one, three, and four, which the ASI has divided into seven segments.
    - Inspected the under-construction museum and reviewed [ancient artifacts](#) and structures excavated in recent years.
  - **Promotion of Heritage:**
    - Emphasized the importance of **preserving the site and promoting it at national and international levels.**
    - Highlighted that the site reflects [India's rich heritage](#), with museum artifacts **showcasing the culture, traditions, and lifestyle** of ancient India.
    - [Artifacts](#) like earthen pots, [terracotta items](#), tools, and human skeletons unearthed during excavation **will be displayed in the museum.**
- **Insights from Findings:**
  - Highlighted the **advanced architecture and urban planning** of the Harappan civilization, with Rakhigarhi resembling modern cities such as Chandigarh.
  - **Key Architectural Features:**
    - The site features a **well-planned drainage system**, large storage vessels for **waste disposal**, and **two-story houses with ventilation systems.**
    - A discovery on mound number three resembles **a stadium, showcasing the architectural prowess of the Harappan people.**
  - **Water Source Evidence:**
    - Remains of a riverbed near the site indicate an **ancient water source essential for the settlement.**

### Rakhigarhi

- **Rakhigarhi** is the **largest Harappan site** in the Indian subcontinent. The site is situated in the plains of [Saraswati river](#), about 27 km from **the seasonal Ghaggar river.**
  - Other large sites of [Indus valley Civilization \(Harappan civilization\)](#) in the Indian subcontinent are Harappa, Mohenjodaro and Ganweriwala in Pakistan and Dholavira (Gujarat) in India.
- At Rakhigarhi, excavations are being done to trace its beginnings and to study its gradual evolution from 6000 BCE (Pre-Harappan phase) to 2500 BCE.

- The site **was excavated by Amarendra Nath of ASI.**

## Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)

- ASI, under **the Ministry of Culture**, is the premier organization for the **archaeological research and protection** of the cultural heritage of the nation.
- It administers more than 3650 ancient monuments, archaeological sites and remains of national importance.
- Its activities include carrying out surveys of antiquarian remains, **exploration and excavation** of archaeological sites, **conservation and maintenance** of protected monuments etc.
- It was founded in 1861 by **Alexander Cunningham**- the first Director-General of ASI. Alexander Cunningham is also known as the **“Father of Indian Archaeology”**.

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## Water Storage Caution by Bhakra Beas Management Board | Rajasthan | 08 Jan 2025

### Why in News?

Recently, [the Bhakra Beas Management Board \(BBMB\)](#) advised its member states to project their water demands cautiously, citing **low water storage levels** and forecasts of below-normal rainfall.

- [The India Meteorological Department \(IMD\)](#) predicts that **North India will receive 86% below the long-period average rainfall** from January to March 2025.

### Key Points

- **Bhakra and Pong Dam Levels:**
  - **Bhakra Dam** on [the Sutlej](#) is at 43% of its total capacity.
  - **Pong Dam** on [the Beas](#) is at 30% of its total capacity.
  - According to [the Central Water Commission \(CWC\)](#), both levels are below the 10-year average.
- **Advisory to Member States:**
  - The **Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB)** informed **Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, and Rajasthan** about the low water availability.
  - BBMB advised these states to adjust their water demands accordingly to address the situation.

### Bhakra Nangal Dam

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- Bhakra Dam is a **concrete gravity dam across the Sutlej River** and is near the border **between Punjab and Himachal Pradesh** in northern India.
- It is **India's second tallest at 225.55 m high next to the 261m Tehri Dam**.
- Its reservoir, **known as the "Gobind Sagar"**, stores up to 9.34 billion cubic meters of water.
- **Nangal dam is another dam** downstream of Bhakra dam. Sometimes both the dams together are called Bhakra-Nangal dam though they are two separate dams.

### Pong Dam



- **In 1975**, Pong dam was built across **the Beas River**. It is also called the Pong reservoir or **the Maharana Pratap Sagar**.
- **In 1983**, the entire reservoir was **declared as a Wildlife Sanctuary by the Himachal Pradesh government**.
- **In 1994**, the Government of India declared it a **"Wetland of National Importance"**. Pong Dam Lake was declared as **Ramsar Site** in November 2002.

# Death by Asphyxiation in Kashmir | Jammu & Kashmir | 08 Jan 2025

## Why in News?

Recently, six people **died due to asphyxiation** in Kashmir valley. The chief minister conveyed his condolences and **urged people to exercise utmost caution** while using heating gadgets.

## Key Points

- **Wider Concerns in the Valley:**
  - The incident highlighted **the widespread use of heating gadgets** in Kashmir during harsh winters.
  - Kashmir has already experienced two to three major spells of snowfall in 2025.
- **Health Advisory and Expert Recommendations:**
  - The **Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences** warned against **carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning**.
    - CO is a **colourless, odourless gas** that can be deadly in large amounts.
    - **Rising cases of CO poisoning** require emergency interventions in critical care units.
    - Doctors explained how **gas, charcoal, and wood-based appliances deplete oxygen in poorly ventilated spaces**, producing harmful gases like CO and CO<sub>2</sub>.
    - **Symptoms** of CO poisoning include dizziness, headache, fatigue, shortness of breath, confusion, chest pain, and unconsciousness.
    - CO **binds with haemoglobin**, impairing oxygen transportation in the body.
  - It is suggested to distribute **Carbon Monoxide Sensors** to households at subsidized rates through local bodies.
    - It is a **device that detects the presence of the carbon monoxide (CO) gas** to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.

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# Armed Forces Tribunal (AFT) in Jammu and Kashmir | Jammu & Kashmir | 08 Jan 2025

## Why in News?

Recently, **the Supreme Court** proposed setting up Benches of **the Armed Forces Tribunal (AFT)** in **Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh** to address the rising backlog of defence-related cases from these regions.

## Key Points

- **Current Burden on AFT Chandigarh:**
  - The SC noted that AFT Chandigarh is handling cases from Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh.
  - Setting up **circuit benches in Jammu and Kashmir, Shimla, and Dharamshala** would help reduce the backlog.
- **Supreme Court's Directions to the Centre:**
  - The **court instructed the Centre to compile data** on the total sanctioned strength and vacancies in **tribunals**.
  - The Centre was asked to **propose a systematic mechanism for filling these posts**.
  - **Details of ongoing recruitment processes** for tribunal posts must be submitted within four weeks.

## Armed Forces Tribunal (AFT)

- It is a military tribunal in India. It was established under the **Armed Forces Tribunal Act, 2007**.
- It has provided the power for the adjudication or trial by AFT of disputes and complaints with respect to commission, appointments, enrolments and conditions of service in respect of persons subject to [the Army Act, 1950](#), [The Navy Act, 1957](#) and [the Air Force Act, 1950](#).
- The Judicial Members are retired **High Court Judges** and Administrative Members are retired Members of the Armed Forces who have held the rank of Major General/ equivalent or above for a period of three years or more, **Judge Advocate General (JAG)**, who have held the appointment for at least one year are also entitled to be appointed as the Administrative Member.

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## Violation of Forest Rights Act in Madhya Pradesh | Madhya Pradesh | 08 Jan 2025

### Why in News?

[The Ministry of Tribal Affairs \(MoTA\)](#) took cognizance of petitions and complaints from 52 villages regarding **non-recognition of forest rights** and forceful eviction attempts around **the Rani Durgavati Tiger Reserve** in Madhya Pradesh.

### Key Points

- **Restrictions and MoTA's Directive:**
  - The villagers alleged that after the notification of Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve in September 2023, forest rights claims were denied, and forceful relocations occurred, **violating [the Forest Rights Act \(FRA\) 2006](#) and [Wildlife Protection Act \(WLPA\) 1972](#)**.
  - Villagers claimed restrictions on accessing forest resources, produce, and farms.
  - MoTA's letter emphasized that **denying communities their rights is a violation** and advised that the issues be resolved in consultation with state forest departments, and district collectors.
  - The letter was also directed to the [National Commission for Scheduled Tribes](#), district collectors, and [the National Tiger Conservation Authority](#) for appropriate action and safeguarding community interests.
- **Legal Framework for Relocation:**
  - The Wildlife Protection Act allows the **creation of 'inviolable' areas for tiger conservation**, but only after recognizing and settling the **rights of tribal and forest-dwelling communities**.
  - **Relocation of villagers can only occur voluntarily** after their rights are recognized, in accordance with both FRA and WLPA.
  - MoTA stressed the importance of **Gram Sabha consent and community participation in relocation decisions** for critical wildlife habitats.

### The Forest Rights Act, 2006

- It was introduced to formally recognise and grant forest rights and occupation in **forest lands to forest-dwelling [Scheduled Tribes](#)** and other traditional forest dwellers who have resided in these forests for generations, even though their rights had not been officially documented.
- It aimed to **address the historical injustices** faced by forest-dwelling communities due to the

forest management policies of colonial and post-colonial India, which failed to acknowledge their **long-standing symbiotic relationship with the forests**.

- Additionally, the Act sought to **empower forest dwellers** by enabling them to access and utilise forest resources sustainably, promote biodiversity and ecological balance, and protect them from unlawful evictions and displacement.

## Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972

- It provides a legal framework for the **protection of various species of wild animals and plants**, management of their habitats, regulation, and control of trade in wild animals, plants, and products made from them.
- The act also **lists schedules of plants and animals that are afforded varying degrees of protection and monitoring** by the government.
- India's entry to the [CITES \(Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora\)](#) was made easier by the Wildlife Act.

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## Landslide Dams in Uttarakhand | Uttarakhand | 08 Jan 2025

### Why in News?

A recent study by [IIT Roorkee](#) identified [the Alaknanda River](#), flowing through the Garhwal region, as the **most vulnerable to landslide-induced natural dams**. The study is titled '**Landslide Dam Studies in Uttarakhand, India: Past, Present, and Future**' and published by Springer.

- It highlights that the Alaknanda is followed by [the Mandakini, Dhauliganga, and Bhagirathi rivers](#) in terms of susceptibility to such dams.

### Key Points

- **Findings of the Study:**
  - **Uttarakhand's Terrain:**
    - Uttarakhand's narrow valleys and gorges make it highly vulnerable to landslide-induced natural dams, which block rivers and create upstream lakes.
    - These blockages pose a significant risk of [landslide lake outburst floods \(LLOFs\)](#), which can have catastrophic consequences.
  - **Most Affected Areas:**
    - Chamoli, Rudraprayag and Uttarkashi, are the most affected by landslide dams.
    - The breach of **Gohna Tal in Chamoli** remains the region's most severe landslide dam incident, impacting areas downstream as far as Haridwar.
  - **Historical Context of Landslide Dams:**
    - Landslide dam formations in Uttarakhand trace back to the **Last Glacial Maximum (LGM)**, between 29,000 and 19,000 years ago.
    - Significant events of landslide damming have been recorded since the 19th century, with the most notable being the breach of Gohna Lake in 1970, which had long-term impacts.
  - **Current Trends and Concerns:**
    - The study indicates that the **peak month for landslide dam events is August**, coinciding with monsoon rains.
    - [Climate change, deforestation, road construction, and hydropower projects](#) have exacerbated the frequency of such events in recent decades.

- **Risk Mitigation and Preparedness:**
  - While there have been fewer major incidents since 2018, the study stresses the need for **preparedness to mitigate future risks**.
  - The instability of landslide dams, especially in narrow valleys, poses significant challenges for **disaster management**.
- **Key Triggers of Landslides:**
  - **Heavy rainfall and cloudbursts** are identified as major triggers of landslides.
  - **Debris slides** are the most common type of landslide responsible for blocking rivers in Uttarakhand's hills.

## Alaknanda River

- It is one of the **headstreams of the Ganga**.
- It **rises at the confluence and feet of the Satopanth and Bhagirath glaciers** in Uttarakhand.
- It **meets the Bhagirathi River at Devprayag** after which it is called the Ganga.
- Its **main tributaries** are the **Mandakini, Nandakini, and Pindar rivers**.
- The Alaknanda system drains parts of **Chamoli, Tehri, and Pauri districts**
- The Hindu pilgrimage center of **Badrinath** and the natural spring Tapt Kund lie along the banks of the Alaknanda River.

## Bhagirathi River

- It is a **turbulent Himalayan river** of Uttarakhand, and one of the two headstreams of the Ganges.
- The Bhagirathi **rises at the foot of Gangotri Glacier, at Gaumukh**, at an elevation of 3892m and fanning out into the 350 km wide Ganga delta, it finally empties into the Bay of Bengal.
- The **Bhagirathi and Alaknanda join at Devprayag in Garhwal** and are **thereafter known as the Ganges**.

## Dhauliganga

- It originates from **Vasudhara Tal**, perhaps the **largest glacial lake** in Uttarakhand.
- Dhauliganga is one of the **important tributaries of Alaknanda**, the other being the **Nandakini, Pindar, Mandakini and Bhagirathi**.
- Dhauliganga is joined by the **Rishiganga river at Raini**.



# Implementation of Criminal Laws in UP | Uttar Pradesh | 08 Jan 2025

## Why in News?

Recently, **the Union Home Minister emphasized** the need to implement the **three new criminal laws in Uttar Pradesh's** seven police commissionerates by 31st March 2025.

- **Seven police commissionerates are** Varanasi, Lucknow, Meerut, Ghaziabad, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Agra, and Kanpur.

## Key Points

- **Review Meeting:**
  - The Union Minister **reviewed the implementation of the three new criminal laws** with Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister.
  - The review covered the **status of provisions related to [police](#), [prisons](#), [courts](#), [prosecution](#), and [forensics](#)** in Uttar Pradesh.
- **Officials Present in the Review:**
  - Senior officials from **[the Ministry of Home Affairs \(MHA\)](#)** and Uttar Pradesh government attended the meeting.
  - Key attendees included the Union Home Secretary, Director General of the **[Bureau of Police Research and Development \(BPR&D\)](#)**, and Director General of the **[National Crime Record Bureau \(NCRB\)](#)**.
- **Directives and Recommendations:**
  - He instructed the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister to **review progress on the implementation of the new laws** in February 2025.
  - He suggested fortnightly reviews by the Chief Minister and weekly reviews by the **Chief Secretary and Director General of Police (DGP)** involving relevant departments.
  - **Use of Technology and Forensic Resources:**
    - He stressed increasing the use of technology, recommending more than one forensic mobile van per district.
    - Forensic teams should be categorized into serious, common, and very common cases to optimize resource allocation and prioritize critical cases.
  - **Monitoring of Zero FIRs:**
    - He also called for regular monitoring of **Zero FIR transfers** to the respective states, ensuring accountability and efficiency.

## Bureau of Police Research and Development

- The Government of India established it **under the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1970**.
- It replaced **the Police Research and Advisory Council (1966)**, with the primary **objective of modernization of the police force**.
- In **1995**, the Government **decided to entrust issues relating to Correctional Administration Work** to the BPR&D.
  - Thereby BPRD has to **ensure the implementation of prison reforms** as well.
- The Government of India decided to create a **National Police Mission** under the administrative control of BPR&D to transform the police forces in the country.
- In **August 2020**, it observed its **50th foundation day**.
- It has been **publishing data on police organisations since 1986**.

## Zero FIR

- Zero FIR is an **FIR** that **can be registered by any police station, irrespective of jurisdiction**, when it receives a complaint regarding a **[cognisable offence](#)**.



- No regular FIR number is assigned at this stage.
- After receiving the Zero FIR, the relevant police station registers a **fresh FIR and starts the investigation.**
- It is meant to help victims of serious crimes, **especially women and children, to lodge a complaint quickly and conveniently**, without having to go from one police station to another.
- It is also meant to **ensure that the evidence and witnesses are not lost or tampered with due to delays** in filing the complaint.
- It is **transferred to the relevant police station** where the offence has taken place or where the investigation has to be conducted.

## National Crime Records Bureau

- NCRB was set up in 1986 to function as a **repository of information on crime and criminals** to assist the investigators in linking the crime to the perpetrators based on the recommendations of the **Tandon Committee, National Police Commission (1977-1981) and the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) Taskforce (1985).**
  - It is part of the **MHA and is headquartered in New Delhi.**
- It also acts as a **“national warehouse” for the fingerprint records** of Indian and foreign criminals, and assists in locating interstate criminals through fingerprint search.
- The NCRB has four divisions: Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS), Crime Statistics, Finger Prints, and Training.
- **NCRB Publications:**
  - **Crimes in India, Accidental Deaths and Suicides, Prison Statistics, and Reports on Missing Women and children in India.**
  - These publications serve as principal reference points on crime statistics not only for police officers but also for criminologists, researchers, media and policymakers not only in India but abroad as well.

