CURRENT AFFAIRS — 19 NOVEMBER 2026

Thursday, 19 November 2026 • Asia/Kolkata (IST) • Uttarakhand + National • UKPSC Prelims & Mains digest

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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS FOR UTTARAKHAND PCS

TODAY AT A GLANCE — 10 THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Char Dham Yatra 2026: record **65.65 lakh** pilgrims, **+29%** over 2025
- **Badrinath** closed for winter on **16 Nov**; **Kedarnath** on **11 Nov**
- Pilgrim deaths up **63%** (182 → **297**); **288** health-related
- UJVN: **Tankul (12 MW)**, **Sirkari Bhyol Rupsiyabagar (120 MW)**, **Tyuni-Plasu (72 MW)** cleared
- Census 2027 Phase-2 in UK: self-enumeration **16–30 Nov**; field **1 Dec–4 Jan**
- **17 killed** in 5 road accidents in 24 hrs; **₹2 lakh** ex gratia
- State budget: **₹4,000 cr** (2000) → **₹1.19 lakh cr**; reverse migration **+44%**
- **APEC 2026** at **Shenzhen** (18–19 Nov) — Xi–Trump–Putin trilateral
- India's first indigenous **H5N1** poultry vaccine by **ICAR-NIHSAD, Bhopal** (20 Nov)
- **Voyager 1** crossed **1 light-day** (~**25.9 billion km**) on **18 Nov**

SECTION A | UTTARAKHAND SPECIAL — State schemes, policy, disaster & ecology, state economy

Char Dham Yatra 2026 ends with all-time record of 65.65 lakh pilgrims

UTTARAKHAND | UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Geography & Economy — Uttarakhand)

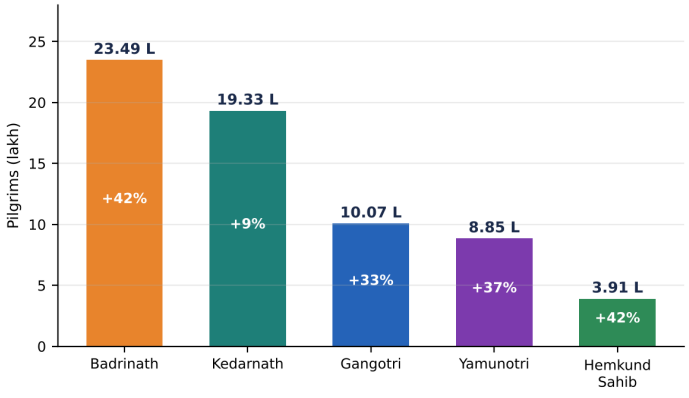
Syllabus Linkage	Uttarakhand geography (shrines, rivers), **pilgrimage tourism economy**; Prelims: shrine–district–river pairs, **winter seats**.
Context	With the portals of **Badrinath** closing on **16 Nov 2026**, the Char Dham Yatra concluded with **65,65,197** pilgrims — up **14.58 lakh (29%)** from **51.07 lakh** in 2025, the highest ever.
Key Facts	● **Badrinath 23.49 lakh** (+42%) led, followed by **Kedarnath 19.33 lakh** (+9%), **Gangotri 10.07 lakh** (+33%), **Yamunotri 8.85 lakh** (+37%). ● **Hemkund Sahib** (Chamoli) drew **3.91 lakh** (+42%). ● **Kedarnath** closed on **11 Nov**; Goddess **Lakshmi** was seated in the Badrinath sanctum before closure. ● Vehicle movement rose **30%** to **6.69 lakh** (till 14 Nov), straining roads and health services.
Way Fwd	Promote the **Winter Char Dham Yatra** at winter seats and adopt **carrying-capacity** caps with real-time registration.
Concept	**Winter seats:** Badrinath → **Pandukeshwar/Jyotirmath**; Kedarnath → **Omkareshwar, Ukhimath**; Gangotri → **Mukhba**; Yamunotri → **Kharsali**. Badrinath on **Alaknanda**, Kedarnath near **Mandakini** source.

Pilgrim and road safety: 17 killed in 24 hours; Gular Ghati bus tragedy

UTTARAKHAND | UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Disaster Management & Governance — Uttarakhand)

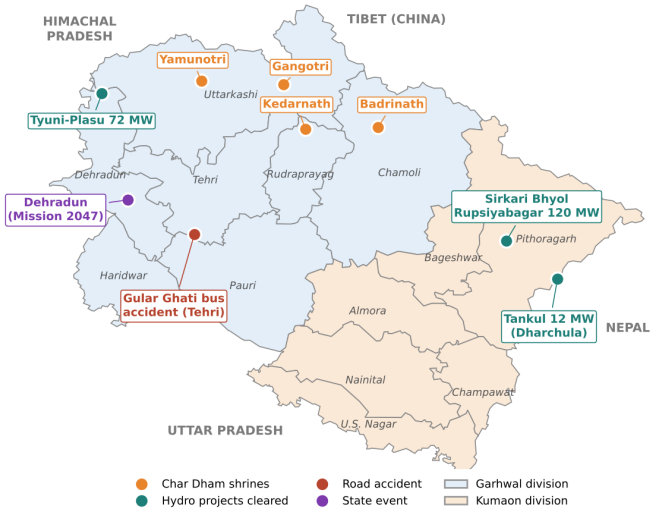
Syllabus Linkage	Disaster management in hill states, **road safety**, health infrastructure; Prelims: **SDRF**, NH routes, golden-hour schemes.
Context	Five accidents between 16–17 Nov killed **17** and injured **38**. A **Haridwar–Joshimath** bus with **34** passengers fell ~**100 m** into a gorge at **Gular Ghati (Tehri Garhwal)** on the **Rishikesh–Badrinath highway**, killing **9**.
Key Facts	● Other crashes: **Kandara road (Rudraprayag)** — 4 dead; three more in **Tehri Garhwal**. ● CM announced **₹2 lakh** to kin of deceased, **₹1 lakh** to seriously injured, up to **₹40,000** for minor injuries. ● Char Dham 2026 recorded **297** pilgrim deaths (+63%), of which **288** were **health-related** (+81%). ● **Kedarnath + Badrinath** alone saw **229** health-related deaths — high altitude & cardiac stress.
Way Fwd	Mandatory **health screening** for elderly pilgrims, crash barriers on black spots, and **cashless golden-hour** care along yatra routes.
Concept	**Golden hour** = first 60 min after injury. **Cashless Treatment of Road Accident Victims Scheme, 2025**: up to **₹1.5 lakh** for **7 days**. **Uttarakhand SDRF** was raised after the **2013 Kedarnath** disaster.

Char Dham Yatra 2026: record 65.65 lakh pilgrims (+29%)



White label = growth over 2025 | Char Dham total excludes Hemkund Sahib

Uttarakhand — Today's News Locations



Schematic map - not to scale; locations indicative

Three UJVN hydropower projects (204 MW) win key clearances

UTTARAKHAND UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Economy & Environment — Uttarakhand)

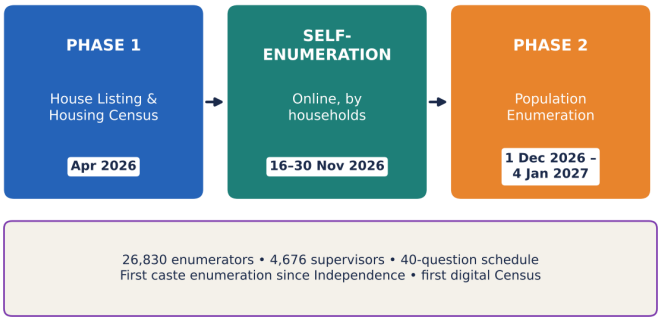
Syllabus Linkage	Energy resources of Uttarakhand, **hydropower vs Himalayan ecology**; Prelims: project–river–district matching.
Context	State utility **UJVN Ltd** said on **18 Nov** that three projects received crucial approvals, adding **204 MW** of run-of-river capacity in the border districts of **Pithoragarh** and **Dehradun (Jaunsar)**.
Key Facts	● **Tankul HEP — 12 MW** (3 × 4 MW), **Dharchula**, on **Simkholagad** (Kali tributary); final forest clearance + **PIB** nod; ~**58.54 MU**/yr. ● **Sirkari Bhyol Rupsiyabagar — 120 MW**, **Munsiyari**, on **Gori river**; **Stage-II forest clearance**; ~**529 MU**/yr. ● **Tyuni-Plasu — 72 MW**, Dehradun district, on **Tons river**; Stage-II forest clearance. ● Stage-II clearance came from the Union **Environment Ministry (MoEFCC)**.
Way Fwd	Pair projects with **cumulative impact** and **GLOF/seismic** assessments, ensure **e-flows** and local benefit-sharing.
Concept	**Run-of-river** = little or no storage. Forest diversion: **Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980** — Stage-I (in-principle) and **Stage-II (final)**. **Gori** joins the **Kali (Sharda)**; **Tons** is the largest tributary of the **Yamuna**.

Census 2027 Phase-2 begins in Uttarakhand with self-enumeration

UTTARAKHAND UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Polity & Governance — Uttarakhand)

Syllabus Linkage	Census & demography, **migration (palayan)** data, federal schedule; Prelims: **Census Act 1948**, reference dates, caste enumeration.
Context	Uttarakhand is among **four states** (with **UP, Punjab, Goa**) where the Centre advanced population enumeration. Self-enumeration runs **16–30 Nov**; door-to-door counting **1 Dec 2026–4 Jan 2027**.
Key Facts	● Phase-1 (**House Listing & Housing Census**) was held from **April 2026**. ● **26,830 enumerators** and **4,676 supervisors** deployed; **40-question** household schedule. ● First **caste enumeration** since Independence; first **digital** Census. ● Centre approved **₹11,718.24 crore** for Census 2027 nationwide.
Way Fwd	Use migration and disability data to target **hill-area development** and **Vibrant Villages** planning.
Concept	Census is a **Union List** subject (**Entry 69, Seventh Schedule**) conducted under the **Census Act, 1948**. National reference date **1 Mar 2027**; snow-bound areas **1 Oct 2026**.

Census 2027 in Uttarakhand — timeline



‘Raibaar Uttarakhand @26 – Mission 2047’: budget, reverse migration, UCC

UTTARAKHAND UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Economy & Governance — Uttarakhand)

Syllabus Linkage	State economy & schemes, **migration (palayan)**, hill agriculture/horticulture; Prelims: state formation, **UCC**, scheme names.
Context	At **Raibaar Uttarakhand @26** (Dehradun, **16 Nov**) and the **Pravasi Uttarakhandi Sammelan** (**13 Nov**), the CM outlined a roadmap for a developed Uttarakhand by **2047**.
Key Facts	● State budget grew from about **₹4,000 crore** (2000) to **₹1.19 lakh crore**. ● **Reverse migration** up **44%** in recent years. ● **Apple Mission**: high-density orchards, cold storage, grading & marketing support. ● Priorities: **UCC**, anti-copying law, **Manaskhand Mandir Mala**, winter tourism, **Vibrant Villages**.
Way Fwd	Anchor Mission 2047 in **hill-specific livelihoods** (horticulture, homestays) and the **Gross Environment Product** to keep growth green.
Concept	Uttarakhand formed on **9 Nov 2000** as India's **27th state**. **UCC** in force from **27 Jan 2025** (first state post-Independence). **Rural Development & Migration Prevention Commission** (2017) is headquartered at **Pauri**.

Raibaar Uttarakhand @26 — Mission 2047 themes



Uttarakhand Hydropower Push — 3 projects get key clearances

12 MW	120 MW	72 MW	204 MW
Tankul HEP	**Sirkari Bhyol Rupsiyabagar**	**Tyuni-Plasu HEP**	**Total new capacity**
Pithoragarh (Dharchula) • Simkholagad (Kali tributary) • Final forest + PIB nod	Pithoragarh (Munsiyari) • Gori river Stage-II forest clearance • ~529 MU/yr	Dehradun (Jaunsar) • Tons river Stage-II forest clearance	All three by state utility UJVN Ltd Run-of-river hill hydropower

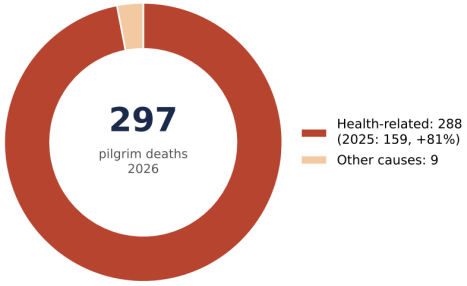
SECTION B | DATA POINT OF THE DAY

CHAR DHAM YATRA 2026 — PILGRIM DEATHS

297 (+63%)

Deaths rose from **182** (2025) to **297**; **288** were **health-related** (+81%), **229** of them at **Kedarnath and Badrinath** — even as footfall hit a record **65.65 lakh**.

Char Dham 2026 deaths: 97% health-related



Total deaths up 63% (182 → 297); vehicles up 30% (5.14 → 6.69 lakh)

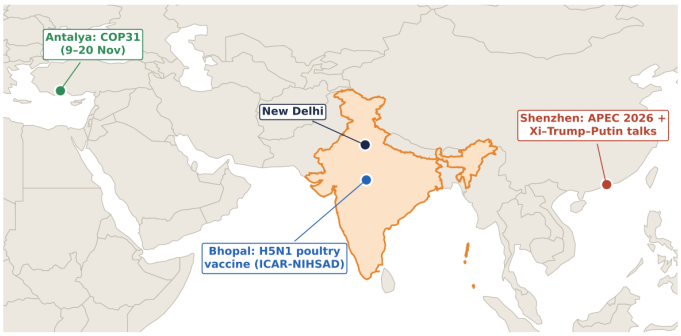
SECTION C | NATIONAL & WORLD — Polity, economy, sci-tech, IR for UKPSC

APEC 2026 in Shenzhen hosts landmark Xi–Trump–Putin trilateral

IR UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (International Relations)

Syllabus Linkage	Global groupings & great-power relations; **impact on India**; Prelims: **APEC** membership, host cities.
Context	China hosts the **APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting** at **Shenzhen** on **18–19 Nov**, where Xi, Trump and Putin are holding a rare three-way meeting focused on **nuclear non-proliferation** and strategic stability.
Key Facts	● Theme: **"Building an Asia-Pacific Community to Prosper Together."** ● **Shenzhen** (Guangdong) — China's first **Special Economic Zone** (1980). ● **APEC**: founded **1989**, **21 member economies**, Secretariat in **Singapore**. ● **India is not an APEC member** (observer status since 2011); Russia is a member.
Way Fwd	India should hedge via **strategic autonomy** — deepen Quad/IPEF ties while keeping Russia channels open.
Concept	**NPT (1968)**: India is a **non-signatory**; recognised nuclear-weapon states are **US, Russia, UK, France, China**. **New START** (US–Russia) expired in **Feb 2026**.

National & World stories on the map



Schematic map - not to scale; locations indicative

India's first indigenous H5N1 (clade 2.3.2.1a) poultry vaccine to launch

HEALTH UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Science-Tech & Agriculture)

Syllabus Linkage	Biotechnology, **zoonoses & One Health**, livestock economy; Prelims: institutes & locations, vaccine types.
Context	Union Agriculture Minister **Shivraj Singh Chouhan** will dedicate the vaccine to the nation on **20 Nov 2026** at **ICAR-NIHSAD, Bhopal**, which developed it.
Key Facts	● An **inactivated** vaccine against avian influenza **H5N1, clade 2.3.2.1a** — first of its kind in India. ● This clade causes most **chicken outbreaks**, with very high flock mortality. ● Outbreaks bring **culling** and trade curbs; no specific commercial vaccine existed for this clade. ● Globally **1,003 human H5N1 cases** and **479 deaths** since 2003 (WHO).
Way Fwd	Combine vaccination with **biosecurity**, surveillance and the **One Health** approach to protect hill backyard poultry too.
Concept	**Inactivated vaccine** = killed pathogen (safe, needs boosters). **NIHSAD, Bhopal** houses a high-containment (**BSL-3+**) animal disease lab. H5N1 is a **zoonotic** influenza A virus.

COP31 at Antalya: India pushes equity; says river-sharing can't ignore bilateral ties

ENVIRONMENT UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Environment & IR)

Syllabus Linkage	Climate negotiations, **CBDR-RC**, transboundary rivers; Prelims: COP hosts, treaty years.
Context	At **COP31** in **Antalya, Turkey** (**9–20 Nov**), Environment Minister **Bhupender Yadav** pressed for equitable climate action and said river sharing (on the **Indus**) cannot ignore the state of bilateral ties.
Key Facts	● Unique split presidency: **Turkey** hosts (COP President **Murat Kurum**); **Australia's Chris Bowen** is **President of Negotiations**. ● India, with the **BASIC** bloc, seeks finance and **CBDR-RC** for developing countries. ● India also backed partnerships for **resilient coasts**. ● **Indus Waters Treaty (1960)** has been held **in abeyance** by India since **April 2025**.
Way Fwd	Push for **adaptation finance** for Himalayan states facing **GLOFs** and glacial retreat.
Concept	**CBDR-RC** = Common But Differentiated Responsibilities & Respective Capabilities (Rio, **1992**). **BASIC** = Brazil, South Africa, India, China. IWT brokered by the **World Bank**.

VB-G RAM G: guidelines for district ombudspersons; 15-day grievance rule

POLITY UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Polity, Governance & Social Justice)

Syllabus Linkage	Welfare schemes, **social audit & accountability**, rural employment; Prelims: Act names, guaranteed days.
Context	The Centre has issued guidelines for **district-level ombudspersons** under the **VB-G RAM G Act, 2025**, following the **Grievance Redressal Rules, 2026** notified on **2 Nov**.
Key Facts	● Complaints must be resolved within **15 days**; unresolved ones **auto-escalate** to the next level. ● Mechanisms at **Gram Panchayat, block and district** levels; enquiries within **7 working days**. ● All complaints logged on a **digital public infrastructure** with status tracking. ● VB-G RAM G replaced **MGNREGA (2005)** and guarantees **125 days** of work.
Way Fwd	Strengthen **social audits** and ensure ombudspersons are independent and staffed in remote hill blocks.
Concept	VB-G RAM G = **Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin)**. Funding **60:40** (Centre:State); **90:10** for NE and **Himalayan states** such as **Uttarakhand**. Links to **Art. 41** (DPSP — right to work).

Voyager 1 becomes first spacecraft one light-day from Earth

SCI-TECH UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Science & Technology)

Syllabus Linkage	Space science, deep-space missions; Prelims: **light-year/AU**, heliopause, RTG.
Context	NASA's **Voyager 1**, launched on **5 Sep 1977**, crossed **one light-day** from Earth at **10:16 UTC on 18 Nov 2026** — a signal now takes about **24 hours** one way.
Key Facts	● Distance ≈ **25.9 billion km** ≈ **173 AU**. ● Entered **interstellar space** (crossed the **heliopause**) in **2012**. ● Powered by **RTGs**; instruments switched off one by one to save power. ● Carries the **Golden Record** of Earth's sounds and images.
Way Fwd	Lessons in long-life power and autonomy can guide **ISRO's** future deep-space missions.
Concept	**1 AU** ≈ **149.6 million km** (Earth–Sun). **Heliopause** = boundary where solar wind meets interstellar medium. **RTG** converts heat from **plutonium-238** decay into electricity.

SECTION D | PRELIMS RAPID-FIRE

Topic	Quick Fact
Uttarakhand — Pilgrimage	**Kedarnath** winter seat: **Omkareshwar Temple, Ukhimath** (Rudraprayag).
Uttarakhand — Education	**GBPUAT, Pantnagar** — India's first agricultural university (**1960**) — marked its **67th Foundation Day**.
Environment / Awards	**Earthshot Prize 2026** held in **Mumbai** (**17 Nov**); founded by **Prince William** in **2020**, five winners get **$1.3 million** each.
International Relations	**Prince and Princess of Wales** met **PM Modi** in New Delhi on **18 Nov** to discuss India–UK ties.
Social Sector	**11 States/UTs** declared **fully literate** under **ULLAS**; **Madhya Pradesh** leads in adult learners.
Defence	Indian Navy marks **50 years** of **long-range maritime reconnaissance**.

SECTION E | PRACTICE CORNER — UKPSC pattern

Q1. With reference to Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), consider the following statements: 1. India is a full member of APEC. 2. The 2026 APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting is being held in Shenzhen. 3. The APEC Secretariat is located in Singapore. Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) — India is **not** an APEC member (it has observer status). APEC 2026 leaders met in **Shenzhen**; the Secretariat is in **Singapore**.

Q2. Which of the following pairs of hydroelectric projects in Uttarakhand and rivers is/are correctly matched? 1. Tyuni-Plasu — Tons 2. Sirkari Bhyol Rupsiyabagar — Gori 3. Tankul — Alaknanda. Select the correct answer:

(a) 1 only
(b) 1 and 2 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) — **Tankul (12 MW)** is on **Simkholagad**, a tributary of the **Kali**, in Dharchula (Pithoragarh) — not on the Alaknanda.

MAINS PRACTICE: Record pilgrim footfall in the Char Dham Yatra brings both prosperity and peril to the fragile Himalaya. Examine the need for a carrying-capacity-based pilgrimage management framework in Uttarakhand. (UKPSC Mains, 200 words)

Hint: Intro with **65.65 lakh** (+29%) and **297** deaths. Body: economic gains (homestays, transport, local jobs) vs. strain — landslide-prone roads, health deaths at altitude, waste, vehicle load (+30%). Solutions: shrine-wise **carrying-capacity** caps, real-time registration, health screening, **Winter Char Dham** to spread footfall, all-weather road safety audits. Conclude with sustainable, **GEP-aligned** tourism.

ONE-LINE REVISION: 65.65 lakh pilgrims (+29%) • **297** deaths (+63%) • **204 MW** hydro cleared (Tankul–Gori–Tons) • Census Phase-2 **1 Dec–4 Jan** • APEC **Shenzhen** • H5N1 vaccine **Bhopal** • Voyager 1 = **1 light-day**

Compiled & simplified by the StudyForGS.com Research Team • ▶ YouTube: @Study_ForGS • ➤ Telegram: t.me/studyforgeneralstudies