CURRENT AFFAIRS — 21 OCTOBER 2026

Wednesday, 21 October 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

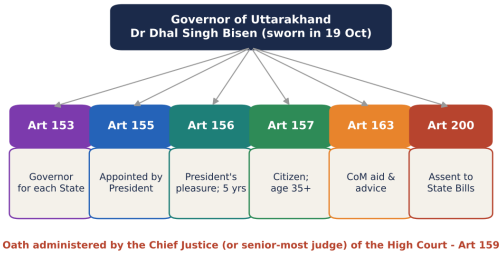
- **Dr Dhal Singh Bisen** sworn in as **9th Governor of Uttarakhand** on **19 Oct** at Lok Bhavan, Dehradun
- Police Commemoration Day (**21 Oct**): CM announces recruitment to **1,600** police posts
- Annual police-station expense fund raised from **₹4 crore to ₹8 crore**
- Assembly session at **Bhararisain (Gairsain)** on **27-28 Oct**; ~**₹5,000 crore** supplementary budget expected
- Char Dham Yatra 2026 crosses a record **59.08 lakh** pilgrims (as of 15 Oct)
- Rain/snow likely above **3,500 m** in Uttarkashi, Rudraprayag, Chamoli and Pithoragarh from **23 Oct**
- GIS 2023: **₹1.01 lakh crore** of **₹3.56 lakh crore** MoUs grounded
- India-US-UAE trilateral held in **Mumbai** on **20 Oct**
- **India-New Zealand FTA** in force from **20 Oct**: **100%** Indian exports duty-free
- CPI inflation **5.54%** (Sept); RBI repo at **5.50%**

SECTION A | UTTARAKHAND SPECIAL — State Polity, Economy, Culture & Ecology

Dr Dhal Singh Bisen sworn in as Uttarakhand's 9th Governor

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

Syllabus Linkage	Paper: Indian Polity — **State Executive (Arts 153-167)**; Uttarakhand GK — **list of Governors**
Context	Appointed by **President Droupadi Murmu** on **12 Oct**, **Dr Dhal Singh Bisen** took oath on **19 Oct 2026** at **Lok Bhavan, Dehradun**, succeeding **Lt Gen Gurmit Singh (Retd)**.
Key Facts	■ Oath administered by **Acting Chief Justice Manoj Kumar Tiwari** of the Uttarakhand High Court ■ Bisen: former **Balaghat (MP) Lok Sabha MP** (17th LS, **2019-24**); **four-time MLA** in Madhya Pradesh ■ Was **MP Cabinet Minister (2003-05)** for forests, transport and mines; an **Ayurvedic practitioner** ■ He is the **9th Governor** of Uttarakhand (first: **Surjit Singh Barnala**, 2000)
Way Fwd	Smooth **Governor-government coordination** is key ahead of the **27 Oct session** and assent to pending bills (**Art 200**).
Concept	**Art 155**: appointed by President; **Art 156**: holds office during President's pleasure (5 yrs); **Art 157**: citizen, **35+ yrs**; **Art 159**: oath by **HC Chief Justice**. Raj Bhavans are now called **Lok Bhavan**.



Western disturbance alert and pre-hibernation bear movement in hills

ENVIRONMENT UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Science-Tech & Environment — Disaster Mgmt)

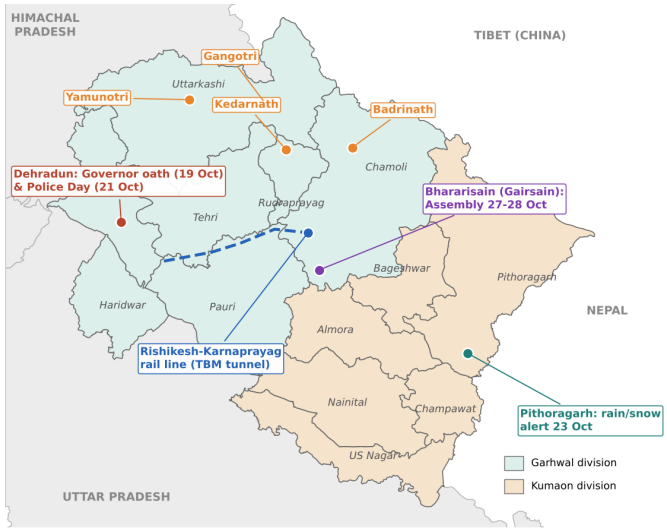
Syllabus Linkage	Climatology — **western disturbances**; ecology — **human-wildlife conflict**
Context	The weather department expects a change between **23-26 Oct**, with light rain in hill districts and **snow above 3,500 m**. Separately, the Forest Department has stepped up patrols as **bears** enter villages.
Key Facts	■ **23 Oct**: light rain in **Uttarkashi, Rudraprayag, Chamoli** (Garhwal) and **Pithoragarh** (Kumaon) ■ Pilgrims and trekkers advised to check forecasts — roads to shrines may be affected ■ Bears move toward settlements in **Sep-Nov** (and again in **Feb**) to build **fat reserves before hibernation** ■ Measures: **camera traps**, patrols, awareness, and clearing **garbage dumps** near villages (**Chamoli, Uttarkashi**)
Way Fwd	Scientific **waste management** in villages and yatra halts, plus quick **ex-gratia** for victims, reduces bear conflict.
Concept	**Western disturbances**: extra-tropical storms from the **Mediterranean** carried by the **subtropical westerly jet**; bring winter rain/snow to NW India. **Asiatic black bear** — **Vulnerable** (IUCN).

Police Commemoration Day: 1,600 police posts, station funds doubled

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

Syllabus Linkage	Governance — **police reforms**, State List subjects; Prelims — **important days**
Context	At the **Police Commemoration Day** parade in **Dehradun** on **21 Oct 2026**, CM **Pushkar Singh Dhami** paid tribute to martyrs and announced a package to strengthen the state police.
Key Facts	■ Recruitment to **1,600 vacant posts** across police wings ■ Annual **police-station expense fund** raised from **₹4 crore to ₹8 crore** ■ **Modern investigation kits** for IOs; review of staff strength at each thana ■ **Police transit hostel** in Dehradun; upgrade of **Police Modern School** and **Police Hospital**
Way Fwd	Fill vacancies on time, raise **forensic capacity** under the new criminal laws and expand **mountain-rescue (SDRF)** training.
Concept	Day marks the **Hot Springs (Ladakh) ambush** of **21 Oct 1959**, when **10 CRPF** personnel were killed. **National Police Memorial**, New Delhi, dedicated on **21 Oct 2018**. 'Police' is **State List (Entry 2)**.

Uttarakhand: Today's News Locations



Schematic map - not to scale; locations indicative

Gairsain session on 27-28 Oct; fiscal-deficit cap of 3% of GSDP

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

Syllabus Linkage	State Legislature, **state finances & FRBM**; Uttarakhand — **summer capital Gairsain**
Context	The **3rd session of 2026** of the **Fifth Uttarakhand Assembly** will be held at **Bhararisain (Gairsain, Chamoli)** on **27-28 Oct**. A supplementary budget of about **₹5,000 crore** is expected.
Key Facts	■ **426 questions** received from **31 MLAs**; Speaker: **Ritu Khanduri Bhushan** ■ Cabinet (at **Banbasa, Champawat** — first-ever there) cleared **Fiscal Responsibility (Amendment) Bill, 2026** ■ **Fiscal deficit ≤ 3% of GSDP** and **debt ≤ 30% of GSDP** for **2026-27 to 2030-31**; relaxation for disasters ■ **Sixth State Finance Commission** report to be tabled; **Irrigation & Water Drainage Bill, 2026** to replace the **1873** canal Act
Way Fwd	Longer, regular sittings at Gairsain would give the **hill-capital** idea substance; keep supplementary spending within FRBM limits.
Concept	**Art 174**: Governor summons the House; gap between sessions **< 6 months**. **Art 205**: supplementary grants. **Gairsain** was declared **summer capital** in **2020**.

₹1.01 lakh crore of GIS investment grounded; film policy push

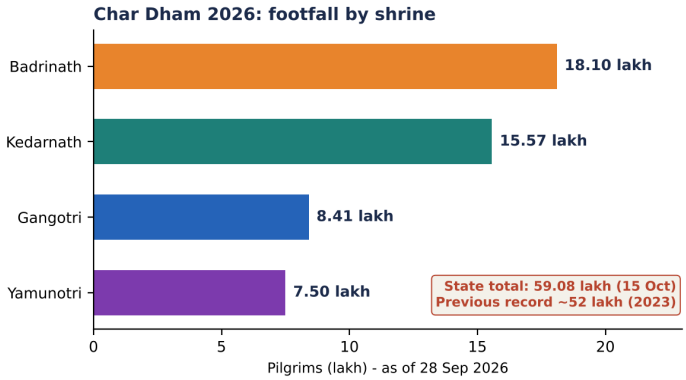
UTTARAKHAND UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Geography & Economy — Uttarakhand)

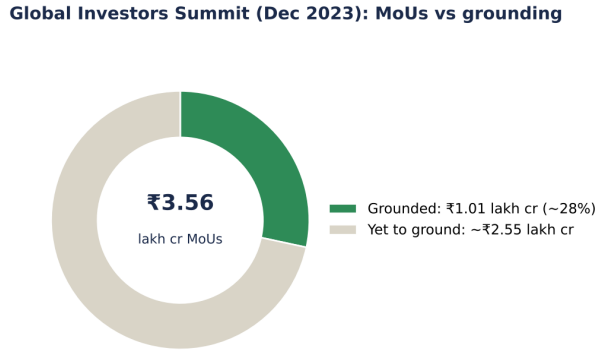
Syllabus Linkage	Uttarakhand economy — **investment, industrial policy, creative economy**
Context	Industries Secretary **Vinay Shankar Pandey** said on **18 Oct** that projects worth **₹1.01 lakh crore** have reached the **grounding stage**. The same day, actor **Akshay Kumar** met the CM on promoting film shoots.
Key Facts	■ **Global Investors Summit, Dec 2023** (Dehradun): MoUs of about **₹3.56 lakh crore** ■ Grounding after **three groundbreaking ceremonies**; '**Nivesh Mitras**' assist investors ■ About **70%** of the state's area is forest — a constraint on land for industry ■ **Uttarakhand Film Policy-2024**: **single-window** shooting permits and **financial grants**
Way Fwd	Publish project-wise tracking, favour **low-footprint sectors** (IT, film, wellness, food processing) suited to hills, and push investment beyond the plains districts.
Concept	**Grounding** = MoU converted into actual investment on site. Hill-investment links to checking **palayan (out-migration)** from hill districts.

Char Dham Yatra 2026 sets record with 59.08 lakh pilgrims

UTTARAKHAND UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (History & Culture — Uttarakhand)

Syllabus Linkage	Uttarakhand — **pilgrimage, tourism economy, carrying capacity**; Prelims — **rivers & winter seats**
Context	The state reports over **59.08 lakh** pilgrims by **15 Oct 2026**, beating the earlier high of about **52 lakh (2023)**. Portals will close for winter in **mid-November**.
Key Facts	■ As of **28 Sep**: **Badrinath 18.10 lakh**, **Kedarnath 15.57 lakh**, **Gangotri 8.41 lakh** (its highest ever), **Yamunotri 7.5 lakh** ■ Tentative closing: **Gangotri 10 Nov**, **Kedarnath & Yamunotri 11 Nov**, **Badrinath 13 Nov** ■ Winter seats: Kedarnath — **Omkareshwar Temple, Ukhimath**; Badrinath — **Narsingh Temple, Joshimath** ■ Gangotri — **Mukhba**; Yamunotri — **Kharsali**
Way Fwd	Promote **winter Char Dham** (shrine seats), slot-based registration and **carrying-capacity** caps on fragile routes.
Concept	**Kedarnath** — Mandakini, a **Jyotirlinga**; **Badrinath** — Alaknanda, one of Adi Shankaracharya's **four dhams**; **Gangotri** — Bhagirathi; **Yamunotri** — Yamuna.



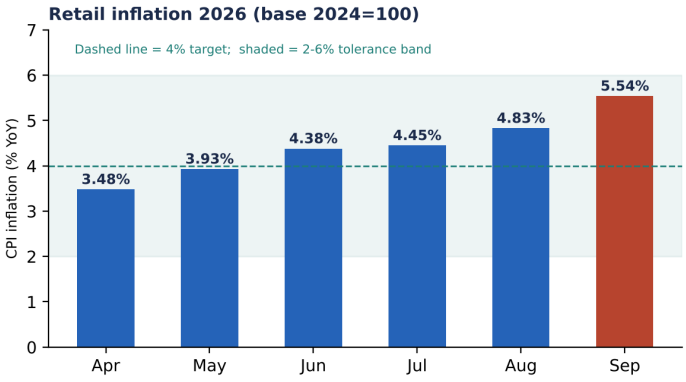


SECTION B | DATA POINT OF THE DAY

CPI (RETAIL) INFLATION, SEPTEMBER 2026

5.54%

Up from **4.83%** in August (base **2024=100**); food inflation **7.74%**, rural **6.08%** vs urban **4.88%**. The RBI raised the **repo rate by 25 bps to 5.50%** on **7 Oct** and shifted to '**calibrated tightening**'; FY27 CPI projection **5.2%**, GDP **7.1%**. Target: **4% ± 2%**.



SECTION C | NATIONAL & WORLD — Polity, Economy, IR, Sci-Tech

India-US-UAE trilateral in Mumbai; trade deal 'close'

IR UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Polity, Governance & IR)

Syllabus Linkage	IR — **India-US, India-West Asia**, energy security; Prelims — **groupings & straits**
Context	On **20 Oct**, EAM **S. Jaishankar**, US Secretary of State **Marco Rubio** and UAE Deputy PM & FM **Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan** met in **Mumbai** amid disruptions in the **Strait of Hormuz**.
Key Facts	■ Agenda: **energy, connectivity** and regional developments; bilateral talks on trade, technology and defence ■ Rubio called India a **'refining superpower'**; discussed processing **Venezuelan oil** at **Jamnagar** ■ US tariff on most Indian goods cut from **50% to 18%** under the **February framework** ■ Jaishankar stressed **zero tolerance for terrorism**
Way Fwd	Conclude the **bilateral trade agreement** while protecting farm and dairy interests; diversify crude sources.
Concept	**I2U2** (India, Israel, UAE, US; **2021**); **IMEC** announced at **G20 New Delhi (2023)**. **Hormuz** links the **Persian Gulf** with the **Gulf of Oman**.

Rajnath at SCO Dushanbe: dismantle the terror ecosystem

IR UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Polity, Governance & IR)

Syllabus Linkage	IR — **regional groupings (SCO)**, terrorism; Prelims — **HQs & membership**
Context	Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** represented India at the **25th SCO Council of Heads of Government** in **Dushanbe, Tajikistan** (**19-20 Oct**), with Pakistan's Deputy PM present.
Key Facts	■ Urged members to **dismantle the terrorism ecosystem**; no **double standards** ■ India to host the first **SCO Civilisational Dialogue Forum** by **end-2026** ■ Backed a **2026-2030 action plan** on multilateral trade and economic cooperation
Way Fwd	Use **RATS** for counter-terror cooperation while pursuing connectivity that respects **sovereignty**.
Concept	SCO founded **2001 (Shanghai)**; India full member **2017**. Secretariat **Beijing**; **RATS** HQ **Tashkent**. CHG = SCO's economic and budget body.

India-New Zealand FTA comes into force

ECONOMY UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Geography & Economy of India)

Syllabus Linkage	Economy — **trade agreements**, external sector; link to **hill horticulture**
Context	The **India-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement** took effect on **20 Oct 2026**, as announced by Commerce Minister **Piyush Goyal**.
Key Facts	■ **Duty-free access for 100%** of Indian exports to New Zealand ■ Expected **US$20 billion** investment into India over **15 years** ■ Gains for **textiles, leather, engineering goods, pharma**; NZ gains in **wood, wool, sheep meat** ■ **Import quotas for apples and kiwifruit** — relevant for Uttarakhand and Himachal orchardists
Way Fwd	Monitor **apple imports** and strengthen **cold chains and grading** for hill fruit to stay competitive.
Concept	Recent pacts: **India-UAE CEPA (2022)**, **India-Australia ECTA (2022)**, **India-EFTA TEPA** (in force 2025). **Tariff-rate quota** = lower duty up to a fixed volume.

China curbs export of tunnel-boring machines from 18 Nov

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

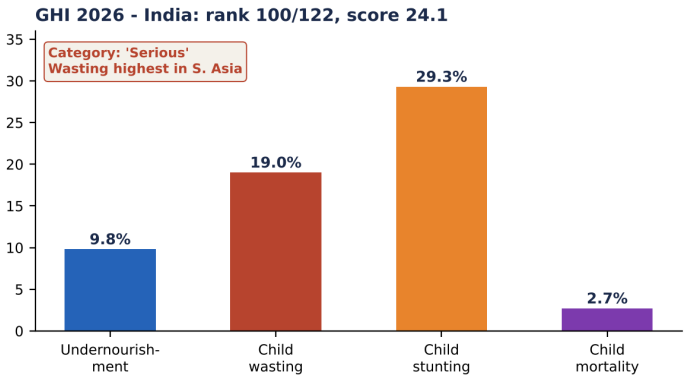
Syllabus Linkage	S&T — **infrastructure technology**; Uttarakhand — **Rishikesh-Karnaprayag rail line**
Context	On **19 Oct**, China announced that exports of **TBMs** and high-altitude heavy machinery will need a **licence** for 'sensitive' destinations from **18 Nov 2026**. India uses TBMs for metro, high-speed rail and Himalayan tunnels.
Key Facts	■ Covers **earth-pressure-balance, slurry-shield** and rock TBMs plus **cutterheads and main drives** ■ Not a blanket ban — other destinations need registration and an export certificate ■ Rishikesh-Karnaprayag line (**125 km**): **16 main tunnels (105 km)** ■ First Himalayan use of a TBM on the ~**14.6-km T-8 (Devprayag-Janasu)** tunnel, now through
Way Fwd	**Indigenise TBMs** under Make in India, diversify suppliers and keep spares stocked for Himalayan projects.
Concept	**TBM** bores a full tunnel face with less ground disturbance than **drill-and-blast / NATM** — useful in the fragile, **seismic-zone IV-V** Himalaya.



Global Hunger Index 2026: India ranked 100th of 122

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

Syllabus Linkage	Social justice — **hunger, nutrition**; Prelims — **indices & publishers**
Context	The **GHI 2026** ('No security without food security') places India **100th of 122** with a score of **24.1** — still **'serious'**. India was **102nd of 123** last year.
Key Facts	■ **Child wasting 19.0%** (up from 16.9%) — highest in South Asia ■ **Child stunting 29.3%** — fell from 'very high' to 'high' for the first time ■ **Undernourishment 9.8%** (from 10.5%); child mortality **2.7%** ■ Ranks better than **Pakistan**; behind **Bangladesh**
Way Fwd	Focus **Poshan 2.0** on wasting through early detection, **millets in PDS** and convergence with WASH.
Concept	GHI weights: **undernourishment 1/3, child mortality 1/3, stunting 1/6, wasting 1/6**; 0-100 scale. Published by **Concern Worldwide & Welthungerhilfe**.



SECTION D | PRELIMS RAPID-FIRE

Topic	Quick Fact
Police Commemoration Day	**21 Oct** — Hot Springs (Ladakh) ambush, **1959**; **10 CRPF** martyrs
Azad Hind Government	Proclaimed by **Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose** in **Singapore**, **21 Oct 1943**
Kedarnath winter seat	**Omkareshwar Temple, Ukhimath** (Rudraprayag)
ISRO LME-1100	**1,100 kN methane**-fuelled engine; hot-fire qualification targeted **mid-2027**
INS Samarthak	Commissioned at **Karwar** on **16 Oct 2026**
Polish PM visit	**Donald Tusk** in India **21-23 Oct**; Strategic Partnership since **Aug 2024**

SECTION E | PRACTICE CORNER

Q1. With reference to the Governor of a State, consider the following statements:
1. The Governor holds office during the pleasure of the President.
2. The oath of office of the Governor is administered by the President.
3. A person must have completed 35 years of age to be appointed Governor.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 only
(b) 1 and 3 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) — Art **156** (President's pleasure) and Art **157** (35 years) are correct. Under Art **159** the oath is administered by the **Chief Justice of the High Court**, not the President — as when **Dr Dhal Singh Bisen** took oath on **19 Oct 2026**.

Q2. Which one of the following correctly matches a Char Dham shrine with its winter seat?
(a) Kedarnath — Narsingh Temple, Joshimath
(b) Badrinath — Omkareshwar Temple, Ukhimath
(c) Gangotri — Mukhba
(d) Yamunotri — Pandukeshwar

Answer: (c) — **Gangotri — Mukhba**; Kedarnath — **Omkareshwar, Ukhimath**; Badrinath — **Narsingh Temple, Joshimath**; Yamunotri — **Kharsali**. Portals close for winter in **mid-November 2026**.

Mains Practice (GS): The Char Dham Yatra has crossed a record 59 lakh pilgrims in 2026. Discuss the economic benefits and ecological risks of rising pilgrim numbers, and suggest a sustainable pilgrimage-management model for Uttarakhand. (250 words)

Hint: Intro with **59.08 lakh** record → benefits (**livelihoods, homestays, reverse palayan**) → risks (**carrying capacity, waste, landslides, crowd crush**) → model: **slot registration, winter yatra, route-wise caps, GEP-linked monitoring**, disaster early warning → conclusion.

ONE-LINE REVISION: Bisen = **9th Governor** (oath **19 Oct**, Art **159**) • Police Day **21 Oct** → **1,600 posts** • Gairsain session **27-28 Oct** • Char Dham **59.08 lakh** • NZ FTA **20 Oct** • CPI **5.54%**, repo **5.50%**

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