CURRENT AFFAIRS — 22 October 2026

Thursday, 22 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

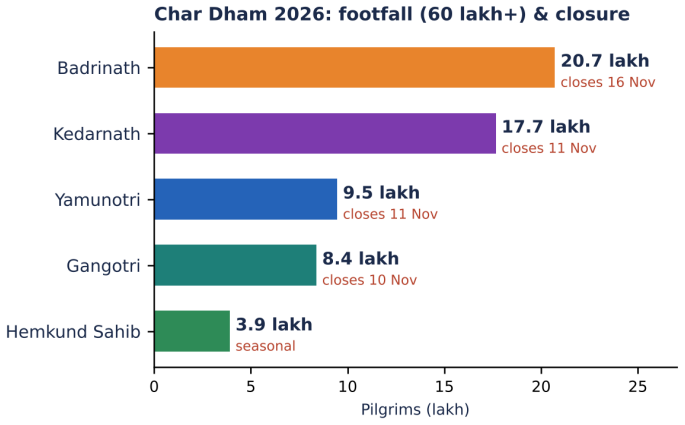
- Char Dham 2026 footfall crosses **60 lakh**; **Badrinath** leads with **20.7 lakh**.
- Winter closure: **Gangotri 10 Nov**, **Kedarnath & Yamunotri 11 Nov**, **Badrinath 16 Nov**.
- Police Commemoration Day (**21 Oct**): **1,600** police posts; thana budget **₹4 cr → ₹8 cr**.
- ASI resumes dig at **Govishan** mound, **Kashipur** (Udham Singh Nagar) — till **March**.
- 3rd session of 5th Assembly at **Bhararisain (Gairsain)** from **27 Oct**.
- **Upper Ganga Canal** shut for **20 days**; Har Ki Pauri runs low before Kumbh **2027**.
- Core sector (base **2022-23**) grows **7.9%** in Sept — highest in new series.
- RBI repo at **5.50%**; stance '**calibrated tightening**'; FY27 CPI projection **5.2%**.
- India-NZ FTA in force from **20 Oct 2026**; **100%** Indian exports get duty-free access.
- SC: converts to non-Hindu faiths can't claim BC quota **solely** on pre-conversion status.

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

Char Dham Yatra 2026 crosses 60 lakh pilgrims; winter closure dates fixed

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

Syllabus Linkage	Uttarakhand tourism & pilgrimage economy; **Char Dham** geography (river sources, districts); crowd & disaster management.
Context	State government data show the 2026 Char Dham season (opened **19-23 April**) has crossed the **6 million (60 lakh)** mark including Hemkund Sahib. Temple committees have now announced the winter closure (kapat-bandi) schedule.
Key Facts	■ **Badrinath 20,70,500**; **Kedarnath 17,65,520**; **Yamunotri 9,45,572**; **Gangotri 8,38,422**; **Hemkund Sahib 3,90,696**. ■ Closure: **Gangotri 10 Nov (12:05 pm)**; **Kedarnath & Yamunotri 11 Nov** (Bhai Dooj); **Badrinath 16 Nov**. ■ Winter seats: Kedarnath → **Ukhimath (Omkareshwar)**; Badrinath → **Pandukeshwar/Jyotirmath**; Gangotri → **Mukhba**; Yamunotri → **Kharsali**. ■ Opening dates 2026: Yamunotri & Gangotri **19 Apr**, Kedarnath **22 Apr**, Badrinath **23 Apr**.
Way Fwd	Promote **winter Char Dham (shitkalin yatra)** to the gaddi-sthals, and use carrying-capacity studies with registration caps to spread the peak load.
Concept	**Kedarnath** (Rudraprayag) lies near the source of the **Mandakini**; **Badrinath** (Chamoli) is on the **Alaknanda**; **Gangotri** and **Yamunotri** (both **Uttarkashi**) mark the **Bhagirathi** and **Yamuna**. Kedarnath is one of the **12 Jyotirlingas**, and Badrinath is one of the **four dhams** set up by Adi Shankaracharya.



Police Commemoration Day: CM announces 1,600 police posts, doubles thana budget

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

Syllabus Linkage	Internal security & police reforms; state welfare measures; **women's safety**; cyber-crime governance.
Context	At the Police Lines, **Dehradun**, on **21 October** (Police Commemoration Day), CM **Pushkar Singh Dhami** paid tribute to personnel who died on duty and announced a package for the state police.
Key Facts	■ Recruitment for about **1,600** vacant posts; annual police-station operational budget raised from **₹4 crore to ₹8 crore**. ■ **Quick Response Teams** at every police station for women's safety; **24x7 help desk** at **AIIMS Rishikesh**. ■ **State Cyber Crime Coordination Centre** under construction at about **₹32 crore**. ■ **206** Uttarakhand police personnel have died on duty since statehood; **154** died nationwide in the past year.
Way Fwd	Fill vacancies on a fixed recruitment calendar and fund **SDRF**-style hill training so police can double as first responders on yatra routes.
Concept	**Police Commemoration Day (21 Oct)** marks the **1959 Hot Springs (Ladakh)** ambush on CRPF personnel by Chinese troops. 'Police' and 'public order' are **State List** subjects (**Entries 1-2, Seventh Schedule**). The **Prakash Singh case (2006)** directed police reforms.

Uttarakhand Police package — 21 Oct 2026

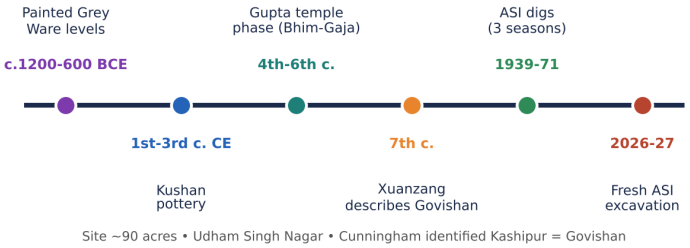
1,600 police posts to be filled	**₹8 cr** thana budget (was ₹4 cr)	**₹32 cr** State Cyber Crime Coord. Centre
206 personnel died on duty since 2000	**QRT** in every thana for women's safety	**24x7** help desk at AIIMS Rishikesh

ASI resumes excavation at Kashipur's Govishan mound, linked to Dronasagar

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

Syllabus Linkage	Ancient history of Uttarakhand; **Kuninda/Kushan/Gupta** phases; foreign travellers' accounts; archaeological sites.
Context	The **ASI Dehradun Circle** has begun a fresh excavation phase on the roughly **90-acre** mound at **Kashipur** (Udham Singh Nagar). The work runs till **March** and will scientifically re-test earlier finds.
Key Facts	■ **Xuanzang** (7th century CE) described **Govishan**; **Alexander Cunningham** identified it with Kashipur. ■ Earlier digs in **1939-40, 1965-66, 1970-71**; the **Bhim-Gaja** temple complex shows **three phases** (earliest possibly **Gupta**). ■ Finds include **Painted Grey Ware (PGW)** and **Kushan, Gupta and medieval** pottery, plus brick and circular structures. ■ Local tradition links **Drona Sagar** lake to **Dronacharya**; the ASI notes such links alone do not prove historicity.
Way Fwd	Publish the excavation reports and develop the site as an **archaeological research and heritage-tourism** hub in the Terai.
Concept	**PGW culture** (c. **1200-600 BCE**) is linked to the later **Vedic** Ganga-Yamuna doab (e.g. **B.B. Lal**'s Hastinapur dig). Other Uttarakhand sites include **Purola** (Uttarkashi, Kuninda), **Jagatgram** (Dehradun, ashvamedha bricks) and **Lakhudiyar** (Almora, rock paintings).

Govishan (Kashipur) through time



Assembly's third session at Bhararisain from 27 Oct; Haridwar Kumbh 2027 logo unveiled

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

Syllabus Linkage	State Legislature (**Art. 174**); **Gairsain** summer capital; Kumbh Mela (UNESCO ICH); pending state Bills.
Context	The **Governor** has summoned the **third session (2026) of the Fifth Uttarakhand Legislative Assembly** from **27 October, 11 am**, at the Vidhan Sabha Bhavan, **Bhararisain (Gairsain, Chamoli)**. CM Dhami also unveiled the **Haridwar Kumbh 2027** logo, website and theme song.
Key Facts	■ The Cabinet has cleared the **Second Uttarakhand Jan Vishwas (Amendment) Bill, 2026** and the **Uttarakhand Fire and Emergency Services Bill, 2026** for tabling. ■ The fire Bill is modelled on the Centre's **Model Fire Service Bill, 2019**. ■ Logo imagery: **Maa Ganga, Har Ki Pauri, Dhanush Bridge**, trident-damru, and the **Mansa Devi & Chandi Devi** hills. ■ The opposition plans a **Vidhan Sabha gherao** at Gairsain on **26 Oct** during its 'Nyay Yatra'.
Way Fwd	Hold longer, regular sessions at Gairsain to give hill districts a real legislative presence, and plan Kumbh with **crowd-flow modelling** and Ganga water-quality targets.
Concept	**Art. 174**: the Governor summons the House, with no more than **6 months** between sessions. **Gairsain (Bhararisain)** was declared the **summer capital** in **2020**. **Kumbh Mela** was inscribed on UNESCO's **Intangible Cultural Heritage** list in **2017**.

Uttarakhand — today's news locations



Upper Ganga Canal shut for 20 days; waste surfaces at Haridwar ghats

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

Syllabus Linkage	River pollution; **Namami Gange**; inter-state water management (**UP-Uttarakhand**); urban solid waste.
Context	The **UP Irrigation Department** has begun the annual **20-day closure** of the **Upper Ganga Canal** (Haridwar-Kanpur) for desilting and pre-**Kumbh** repairs. Water at **Har Ki Pauri** has dropped sharply, exposing heaps of waste and discarded clothes on the riverbed.
Key Facts	■ The canal headworks at **Bhimgoda barrage**, Haridwar, are managed by **Uttar Pradesh**, a legacy issue since the state's creation in **2000**. ■ Pilgrims are bathing with vessels, as the dip at Har Ki Pauri is not possible. ■ Normal discharge will be restored after the **20-day** maintenance drive, around **Dhanteras**. ■ The exposed waste raises questions on the impact of **Namami Gange** spending in the **upper Ganga** stretch.
Way Fwd	Use the closure window for **riverbed clean-up drives**, ghat waste collection points, and IEC campaigns against dumping offerings and clothes.
Concept	**Namami Gange** was launched in **2014**; the **NMCG** is its implementing arm. The Ganga was declared the **National River** in **2008**. The **Upper Ganga Canal** was opened in **1854** under **Proby Cautley**.

Hill weather alert: snow above 3,500 m, rain in four districts; floodplain rules in focus

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

Syllabus Linkage	Western disturbances; Himalayan hazards; **Uttarakhand Flood Plain Zoning Act, 2012**; **DM Act, 2005**.
Context	The **IMD** forecasts light rain in **Uttarkashi, Rudraprayag, Chamoli and Pithoragarh**, with snowfall possible above **3,500 m**. This comes in the final weeks of the yatra and follows the Cabinet's approval of the **Uttarakhand Floodplain Zoning Rules, 2026** (**12 Oct**).
Key Facts	■ The **2026 Rules** operationalise the **2012 Act**: they regulate land use near rivers, curb **encroachment** and keep flood paths open. ■ Only about **four states** have enacted floodplain-zoning laws, based on the CWC's **Model Bill (1975)**. ■ The four alert districts host **Gangotri-Yamunotri (Uttarkashi)**, **Kedarnath (Rudraprayag)**, **Badrinath (Chamoli)** and the **Adi Kailash** route (Pithoragarh). ■ Early snowfall raises the risk of **road blockades** and **hypothermia** on high-altitude yatra routes.
Way Fwd	Map floodplains district-wise and notify the zones, and link IMD **impact-based forecasts** to yatra registration and SMS alerts.
Concept	**Western Disturbances** are extra-tropical storms from the **Mediterranean** carried by the **subtropical westerly jet**; they bring winter rain and snow to the Western Himalaya. **USDMA** functions under the **DM Act, 2005**, with the CM as its chair.

Uttarakhand hazard chain: forecast → alert → regulate → respond → reduce risk



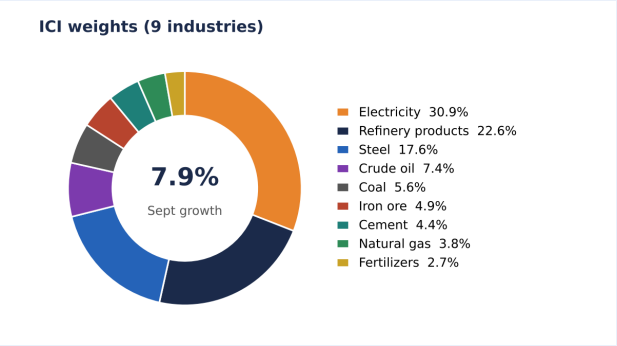
SECTION B | DATA POINT OF THE DAY

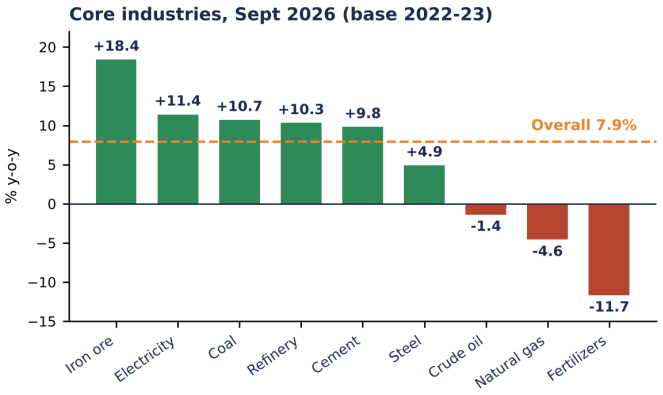
Index of Core Industries — September 2026 (y-o-y growth)

7.9%

Highest since the new **2022-23** base series began; **9** industries incl. **iron ore**; weight leader **electricity 30.9%**; Apr-Sep cumulative **5.1%**.

Why it matters: the core sector makes up a large share of the **IIP**. Strong power and coal output also signals rising demand for **hydropower**, a key asset for Uttarakhand.





SECTION C | NATIONAL & WORLD — Polity, economy, IR, environment, defence

Core sector grows 7.9% in September — highest in the new 2022-23 series

ECONOMY UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Indian Economy)

Syllabus Linkage	Industrial indicators — **ICI vs IIP**; infrastructure sector; base-year revision.
Context	The **Index of Core Industries (ICI)**, released on **21 October** by the **Office of the Economic Adviser, DPIIT**, shows **7.9%** y-o-y growth in **September 2026**, led by iron ore, electricity, coal and refinery products.
Key Facts	■ **Iron ore +18.4%**, **electricity +11.4%**, **coal +10.7%**, **refinery +10.3%**, **cement +9.8%**, **steel +4.9%**. ■ Contractions: **crude oil -1.4%**, **natural gas -4.6%**, **fertilizers -11.7%**. ■ **August** revised to **5.9%** (from 4.8%); **April-September** cumulative growth **5.1%**. ■ The new series (base **2022-23**, from July 2026) adds **iron ore** as the **9th** industry; **electricity** has the top weight at **30.9%**.
Way Fwd	Sustain the momentum through **capex in power and mining**, while fixing the drag from **fertilizers** and **upstream oil and gas**.
Concept	The **ICI** is a **lead indicator** of the **IIP** (released by **NSO, MoSPI**). The ICI is released by DPIIT under the **Ministry of Commerce & Industry**, about **10 days** before the IIP.

Modi-Tusk talks: India and Poland push the Strategic Partnership

IR UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (International Relations)

Syllabus Linkage	India-Europe relations; **India-EU FTA**; defence industrial partnerships.
Context	Polish PM **Donald Tusk** (visit **21-23 Oct**) held delegation-level talks with PM Modi at **Hyderabad House** on **22 Oct**. This is the **first visit by a Polish PM since 2010**.
Key Facts	■ Ties were raised to a **Strategic Partnership** during Modi's **Warsaw visit (Aug 2024)**. ■ Trade goal: from about **US$6 bn** to **US$10 bn**; focus on **defence, technology and space**. ■ Agenda included the **India-Poland Business Forum**, followed by a **Bengaluru** visit on **23 Oct**. ■ The **Russia-Ukraine war** and the **India-EU FTA** also featured in the talks.
Way Fwd	Use Poland as a **Central European gateway** for Make-in-India defence co-production and EU market access.
Concept	**'Good Maharaja'**: **Jam Saheb Digvijaysinhji** of **Nawanagar** sheltered Polish children during **WW-II**. Kolhapur's **Valivade** camp also housed Polish refugees. Poland is an **EU** and **NATO** member.

India-New Zealand FTA in force from 20 Oct; customs e-origin data pact signed

IR UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (International Relations & Economy)

Syllabus Linkage	India's FTAs; **Rules of Origin**; trade facilitation; Indo-Pacific partners.
Context	The **India-NZ FTA** (signed **27 April 2026**) entered into force on **20 October 2026**. The two sides have also signed an **MoC on electronic exchange of origin data** to speed customs clearance under the pact.
Key Facts	■ **100%** of Indian exports get **duty-free** access to New Zealand. ■ Expected **US$20 bn** investment into India; bilateral trade target to be **doubled in 4-5 years**. ■ E-origin exchange cuts **paperwork** and **certificate-of-origin fraud**. ■ Sensitive farm and dairy lines were protected on the Indian side.
Way Fwd	Use the FTA to push **horticulture tech** (apple, kiwi) and **education/skilled mobility**, which matter for Himalayan states like Uttarakhand.
Concept	**Rules of Origin** stop **trade deflection** through third countries. India's recent FTAs include **UAE CEPA (2022)**, **Australia ECTA (2022)**, **EFTA TEPA (in force 2025)** and the **UK CETA (2025)**.

India plans 1% Sustainable Aviation Fuel blending for international flights from 2027

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

Syllabus Linkage	Climate mitigation; biofuels policy; **ICAO-CORSIA**; energy security.
Context	India is set to mandate that airlines uplift **SAF-blended ATF** on international flights from **January 2027**, ahead of the **mandatory phase of CORSIA**. A formal notification is expected soon.
Key Facts	■ Blending path: **1% (2027) → 2% (2028) → 5% (2030)**. ■ **IOC Panipat** co-processes used cooking oil and is building an **alcohol-to-jet** unit (about **30,000 t/yr**). ■ **CORSIA** (ICAO, **2016**): voluntary phases **2021-26**, mandatory **2027-35**; baseline **85% of 2019** emissions. ■ Indian airlines face an estimated offset liability of about **5 Mt CO_2 per year**.
Way Fwd	Notify a **national SAF policy** with feedstock (UCO, agri-residue, **pine needles**) supply chains and a domestic carbon-credit framework.
Concept	**SAF** is drop-in jet fuel made from **biomass or waste**, cutting lifecycle CO_2 by up to **80%**. In 2018, **Dehradun's CSIR-IIP** produced the bio-jet fuel used on India's **first biofuel-powered flight** (Dehradun-Delhi).

SC: converts to non-Hindu faiths cannot claim BC quota solely on pre-conversion status

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

Syllabus Linkage	Reservation jurisprudence — **Art. 15(4), 16(4)**; OBC identification; the SC Order of 1950.
Context	A Bench of Justices **Prashant Kumar Mishra** and **Shree Chandrashekhar** dismissed **Tamil Nadu's** appeal and upheld the Madras HC, which had quashed a **March 2024 GO** extending BC benefits to converts. The ruling has opened a debate on the religion-neutrality of OBC lists.
Key Facts	■ **Art. 16(4)** benefits cannot rest **solely** on pre-conversion caste; the **'source of social backwardness'** must be tested afresh. ■ Under the **Constitution (SC) Order, 1950**, SC status is limited to **Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists**. ■ **Reconversion** to Hinduism needs independent, fact-specific verification. ■ Private religious bodies **cannot** decide statutory entitlements.
Way Fwd	States should identify OBCs through **quantifiable, community-wise data** (as in **Indra Sawhney**), and Parliament may revisit the SC-status question raised before the **K.G. Balakrishnan Commission**.
Concept	**Indra Sawhney (1992)**: **27%** OBC quota upheld, **creamy layer** excluded, **50%** ceiling set. The **102nd Amendment (2018)** gave the **NCBC** constitutional status (**Art. 338B**), and the **105th (2021)** restored states' power to list SEBCs.

Army Commanders' Conference: Defence Minister to release new Land Warfare Doctrine

DEFENCE UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Internal Security & Defence)

Syllabus Linkage	Defence preparedness; military doctrines; technology in warfare; **India-China border** (incl. Uttarakhand's **Central Sector**).
Context	The **biannual Army Commanders' Conference** (**21-23 Oct**, New Delhi), chaired by the **COAS**, will see **Rajnath Singh** release the **Land Warfare Doctrine**. It is an overarching framework to prepare the Army for **multi-domain** future conflicts.
Key Facts	■ Release of the annual **UN Journal**, and honours for Indian **UN peacekeepers**. ■ Awards for **Green Military Stations** and **Aviation Flight Safety**. ■ The **CDS**, the **Navy Chief** and the **MeitY Secretary** will address the conference. ■ The previous Land Warfare Doctrine was issued in **2018**.
Way Fwd	Align the doctrine with **theatre commands**, drones and counter-drone tech, and **border-village infrastructure** (Vibrant Villages) in the Central Sector.
Concept	Uttarakhand shares a **345 km** border with **China (Tibet)** and **275 km** with **Nepal**. Key passes include **Lipulekh, Mana, Niti** and **Thang La**. The **Garhwal Rifles** (Lansdowne) and the **Kumaon Regiment** (Ranikhet) are rooted in the state.

SECTION D | PRELIMS RAPID-FIRE

Fact / Topic	Key detail
Virasat Arts & Heritage Festival (31st)	**5 days** from **23 Oct**, **Dehradun**; organised by **REACH**
Gangotri winter seat	**Mukhba** village (Harsil valley), Uttarkashi
Hemkund Sahib 2026 footfall	**3,90,696**; lake at about **4,632 m**, Chamoli
Upper Ganga Canal	Opened **1854**; engineer **Proby Cautley**; headworks at **Haridwar**
IBSAMAR IX (2026)	India-Brazil-S. Africa naval exercise, **Simon's Town**; India sent **INS Tarkash**
RBI MPC minutes (63rd meeting)	Repo **5.50%**; stance **calibrated tightening**; **2** external members dissented on stance

SECTION E | PRACTICE CORNER

Q1. With reference to the Char Dham shrines of Uttarakhand, consider the following pairs (shrine : winter seat):
1. Kedarnath : Ukhimath
2. Gangotri : Kharsali
3. Badrinath : Pandukeshwar/Jyotirmath

How many of the pairs given above are correctly matched?

(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Answer: (b) — Pairs **1** and **3** are correct. **Gangotri's** winter seat is **Mukhba**; **Kharsali** is the winter seat of **Yamunotri**.

Q2. Consider the following statements about the Index of Core Industries (ICI):
1. It is released by the National Statistics Office (MoSPI).
2. In its 2022-23 base series, iron ore has been added as a new industry.
3. Electricity carries the highest weight in the new series.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: (b) — The ICI is released by the **Office of the Economic Adviser, DPIIT** (Commerce & Industry), not the NSO, which releases the **IIP**. **Iron ore** is the new **9th** industry, and **electricity (30.9%)** carries the top weight.

MAINS PRACTICE — The record Char Dham footfall of 2026 is both an economic opportunity and an ecological risk for Uttarakhand. Discuss, and suggest a framework for sustainable pilgrimage management in the Himalaya. (UKPSC Mains, 200 words)

Hint: Cover **footfall data (60 lakh+)**, livelihoods (ponies, homestays, transport) and the **GSDP** share of tourism. On risks, discuss **carrying capacity**, the **2013 Kedarnath** disaster, waste, landslides and **early snowfall**. Suggest **winter yatra**, registration caps, the **Floodplain Zoning Rules 2026**, **GEP**-linked planning and IMD impact-based alerts.

ONE-LINE REVISION: Char Dham **60 lakh+** → closures **10/11/16 Nov** | Police posts **1,600**, thana budget **₹8 cr** | Govishan dig, **Kashipur** | Assembly at **Bhararisain 27 Oct** | Core sector **7.9%** | Repo **5.50%** | NZ FTA live **20 Oct** | SAF **1% → 2027**.

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