CURRENT AFFAIRS — 23 OCTOBER 2026

Friday, 23 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

- Uttarakhand Cabinet (**22 Oct**) cleared **25 proposals**; notified **UCC (Amendment) Rules, 2026**.
- SC/ST free-coaching family income cap raised from **₹2 lakh to ₹8 lakh**.
- Maintenance grant renamed **Mukhyamantri Ekal Nari Samman Yojana**.
- Cabinet approves **Uttarakhand Adventure Tourism Corporation Ltd**.
- Assembly session at **Bhararisain (Gairsain)** from **27 Oct**.
- **Char Dham Yatra 2026** crosses a record **60 lakh** pilgrims.
- **Drug-Free Uttarakhand** walkathon flagged off in **Dehradun**.
- India–Poland: trade of **US$6 bn** to be **doubled by 2030**; Poland joins **CDRI**.
- ISRO's **NVS-03** on **GSLV Mk II** on **30 Oct** to restore **NavIC**.
- CDSCO: **330 NSQ** drug samples in September (**220** in August).

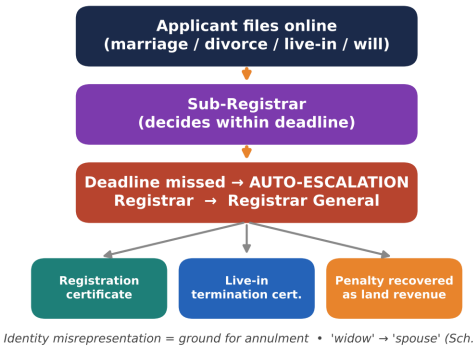
SECTION A | UTTARAKHAND SPECIAL

Cabinet notifies UCC (Amendment) Rules, 2026; clears 25 proposals ahead of Gairsain session

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

Syllabus Linkage	Polity & governance of Uttarakhand — **UCC**, **Article 44** (DPSP), state legislature, delegated legislation. Prelims pointer: UCC in force since **27 Jan 2025**; **Bhararisain (Gairsain)** is the **summer capital**.
Context	On **22 Oct 2026** the Cabinet chaired by CM **Pushkar Singh Dhami** cleared **25 proposals**, including the **Civil Code (Amendment) Rules, Uttarakhand, 2026** to operationalise the **UCC (Uttarakhand) (Amendment) Act, 2026**, ahead of a two-day Assembly session at **Bhararisain** from **27 Oct**.
Key Facts	■ New rules remove **implementation difficulties and clerical errors** in registration of marriage, divorce, **live-in relationships** and succession. ■ Earlier amendment (Ordinance, **Jan 2026**, **Article 213**): identity misrepresentation = ground for **annulment**; Registrar issues a **termination certificate** for live-ins; delays **auto-escalate** to Registrar / Registrar General. ■ **Uttarakhand GST (Amendment) Bill** approved for introduction, in line with central GST changes. ■ **One-time settlement** scheme for about **3,600** pending stamp-duty cases. ■ Business Advisory Committee meets **24 Oct**; Speaker **Ritu Khanduri Bhushan**.
Way Fwd	Publish simple UCC FAQs in Hindi, Garhwali and Kumaoni, keep the online portal grievance-friendly, and hold longer sittings at Gairsain to give the summer capital real substance.
Concept	**UCC** = one set of personal laws (marriage, divorce, succession, live-in) for all citizens; **Article 44** (DPSP) asks the State to 'endeavour to secure' it. Uttarakhand = **first state after Independence** to enforce a UCC (Goa's code is pre-1961). **Scheduled Tribes are exempt**. Rules framed by the executive under an Act = **delegated legislation**.

UCC Registration — 2026 Amendment Flow



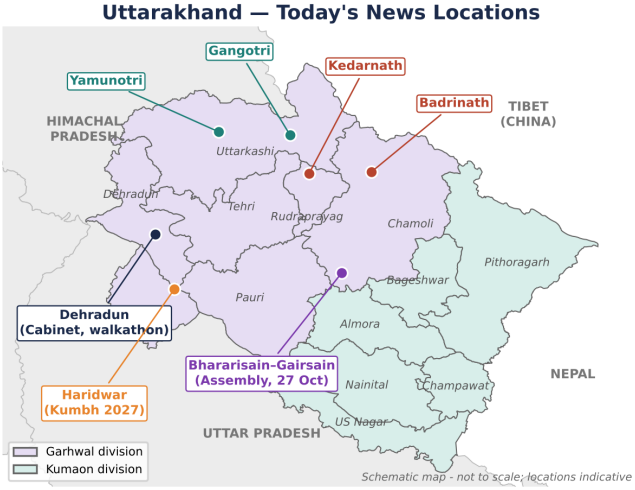
Identity misrepresentation = ground for annulment • 'widow' → 'spouse' (Sch. II)

Char Dham Yatra 2026 crosses a record 60 lakh pilgrims; portals to close from 10 November

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

Syllabus Linkage	Religious tourism, culture and geography of Uttarakhand; crowd and disaster management. Prelims pointer: rivers and districts of the **four dhams**, their **winter seats**.
Context	On **23 Oct 2026** CM Dhami said more than **60 lakh** devotees have visited the Char Dham this season — a new record — across pre-monsoon and post-monsoon phases; work on the **Badrinath master plan** and **Haridwar Kumbh 2027** is under way.
Key Facts	■ Opened: Gangotri & Yamunotri **19 Apr** (Akshaya Tritiya), **Kedarnath 22 Apr**, **Badrinath 24 Apr**. ■ Expected closing: Gangotri **10 Nov**, Kedarnath & Yamunotri **11 Nov** (Bhai Dooj), Badrinath ~**13 Nov** (tentative). ■ **Biometric/online registration** is mandatory for every pilgrim. ■ **Kanwar Yatra 2026** drew nearly **5 crore** pilgrims (state figure).
Way Fwd	Use registration data for real-time **carrying-capacity** caps, extend landslide early-warning and health posts along routes, and promote the **winter (shitkaleen) yatra** to spread footfall.
Concept	**Yamunotri** (Uttarkashi, Yamuna), **Gangotri** (Uttarkashi, Bhagirathi), **Kedarnath** (Rudraprayag, Mandakini; one of **12 Jyotirlingas**), **Badrinath** (Chamoli, Alaknanda). Winter seats: Kedarnath → **Ukhimath**, Badrinath → **Joshimath/Pandukeshwar**, Gangotri → **Mukhba**, Yamunotri → **Kharsali**.

Uttarakhand — Today's News Locations

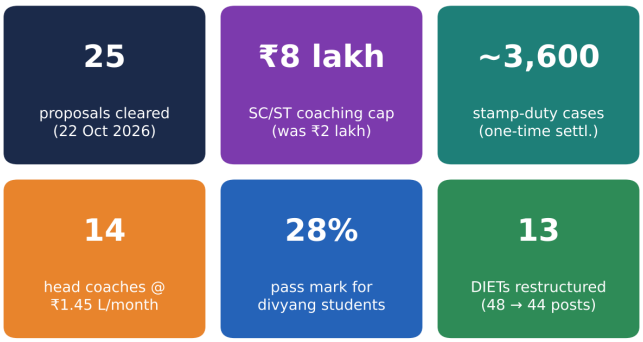


Social-justice push: SC/ST free-coaching cap raised to ₹8 lakh; 'Ekal Nari Samman Yojana'; relief for divyang students

SOCIETY UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Social Justice & Welfare — Uttarakhand)

Syllabus Linkage	Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections (SC/ST, women, PwD); education and human-rights institutions. Prelims pointer: state scheme names; **State Human Rights Commission** data.
Context	The same **22 Oct** Cabinet widened welfare coverage: more **SC/ST** students now qualify for free competitive-exam coaching, a grant for single women was rebranded, and Board-exam norms were eased for students with disabilities.
Key Facts	■ Free coaching for **SC/ST** students: family income limit raised from **₹2 lakh to ₹8 lakh**. ■ Maintenance grant renamed **Mukhyamantri Ekal Nari Samman Yojana** (single women). ■ **5% relaxation** in pass marks for **divyang** students in Uttarakhand Board exams — **28%** is now a pass. ■ All **13 DIETs** restructured; sanctioned posts per DIET cut from **48 to 44**. ■ **State Human Rights Commission** report (2019–22) approved: **16,388** cases, **15,075** disposed (~**92%**).
Way Fwd	Track coaching outcomes (selections), and deliver Ekal Nari benefits by DBT so that widows and deserted women in remote hill districts are not left out.
Concept	**DIET** (District Institute of Education & Training) = teacher-training body under the **National Policy on Education, 1986**; **RPwD Act, 2016** — benchmark disability **≥40%**; State Human Rights Commissions are set up under the **Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993**.

Uttarakhand Cabinet — 22 Oct 2026 at a glance



Uttarakhand Adventure Tourism Corporation approved; 'One District, One Sport' gets 14 head coaches

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

Syllabus Linkage	Tourism-led economy of Uttarakhand, hill infrastructure, sports development, migration (**palayan**). Prelims pointer: adventure hubs — **Rishikesh**, **Auli**, **Tehri Lake**.
Context	The Cabinet approved a dedicated **Uttarakhand Adventure Tourism Corporation Limited**, sped up hill-road approvals and strengthened the sports ecosystem with contracted coaches and free bus travel for award-winning athletes.
Key Facts	■ New state PSU: **Uttarakhand Adventure Tourism Corporation Ltd** to plan, regulate and market adventure tourism. ■ **One District, One Sport**: **14 head coaches** on **3-year** contracts at a fixed **₹1.45 lakh/month**. ■ Free travel in **Uttarakhand Transport Corporation** buses for athletes with state/national awards. ■ PWD: second-phase works (slope cutting, **retaining walls**, culverts, drains) approved in a **single stage**. ■ **PM POSHAN**: land for **centralised kitchens** in **Haridwar** and **Udham Singh Nagar**.
Way Fwd	Pair promotion with strict safety SOPs, carrying-capacity limits and certification of local youth as guides, so that adventure tourism also helps reverse palayan.
Concept	Adventure assets: **Ganga at Rishikesh** (rafting), **Auli**, Chamoli (skiing), **Nehru Institute of Mountaineering, Uttarkashi** (est. **1965**), **Tehri Lake** (water sports). **Palayan** = out-migration from hill villages; studied by the **Rural Development & Migration Commission** (set up **2017**).

'Drug-Free Uttarakhand' walkathon flagged off in Dehradun — 'Nashe ko Na, Zindagi ko Haan'

SOCIETY UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Social Issues & Internal Security)

Syllabus Linkage	Social issues — substance abuse among youth, role of civil society; drug trafficking as an internal-security threat. Prelims pointer: **NDPS Act, 1985**; **Nasha Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan (2020)**.
Context	On **23 Oct 2026** CM Dhami flagged off the walkathon at **Dr B.R. Ambedkar Ground, ONGC, Dehradun**, administered an anti-drug pledge and outlined a multi-track strategy to make the state drug-free.
Key Facts	■ Organised by the **ONGC Officers Association**; Cabinet Minister **Khajan Das** attended. ■ Slogan: **'Nashe ko Na, Zindagi ko Haan'** (No to drugs, yes to life). ■ Strategy: **enforcement** against peddlers + **awareness** + **de-addiction & treatment** + **rehabilitation**. ■ Promote **sports, yoga and exercise**; involve parents, teachers, workplaces and NGOs.
Way Fwd	Map hotspots along the plains corridor (Dehradun, Haridwar, Udham Singh Nagar), expand district de-addiction centres and run peer-led school programmes.
Concept	**NDPS Act, 1985** regulates narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; **Narcotics Control Bureau** (est. **1986**) is the nodal agency; **Nasha Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan** launched **15 Aug 2020**; **26 June** = International Day against Drug Abuse.

Drug-Free Uttarakhand — Strategy



Police Commemoration Day: 1,600 posts to be filled; police-station budget doubled to ₹8 crore

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

Syllabus Linkage	Police administration, cyber crime, internal security. Prelims pointer: **21 October** = Police Commemoration Day (**Hot Springs, Ladakh, 1959**).
Context	At Police Lines, Dehradun on **21 Oct**, CM Dhami paid tribute to personnel who died on duty and announced recruitment, funding and welfare steps for Uttarakhand Police.
Key Facts	■ About **1,600** vacant posts across police units to be filled soon. ■ Annual police-station operational budget raised from **₹4 crore to ₹8 crore**. ■ **State Cyber Crime Coordination Centre** under construction (~**₹32 crore**). ■ **206** Uttarakhand Police personnel have died on duty since statehood (DGP **Deepam Seth**); **154** nationwide in the past year. ■ 24x7 police help desk at **AIIMS Rishikesh**; quick response teams for women's safety at every police station.

Way Fwd	Implement Prakash Singh-style reforms, raise women's share in the force and integrate the cyber centre with the national **1930** cyber helpline.
Concept	**Police** and **public order** are in the **State List** (Entries 1–2, Seventh Schedule). **Prakash Singh case (2006)**: SC ordered reforms — State Security Commission, fixed DGP tenure, Police Establishment Board. The Day honours **10 CRPF men** killed at **Hot Springs** on **21 Oct 1959**.

SECTION B | DATA POINT OF THE DAY

INDIA'S NON-FOSSIL POWER CAPACITY

308.03 GW (>55%)

Out of about **560 GW** installed — the **2030 NDC** goal of **50%** non-fossil capacity is already crossed; next target **500 GW by 2030** (Panchamrit). Hill States like **Uttarakhand** get **50%** central aid under PM-KUSUM.

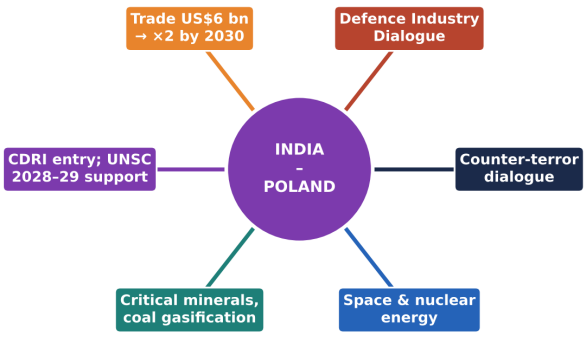
SECTION C | NATIONAL & WORLD

India–Poland: Tusk visit sets goal to double trade by 2030; Defence Industry Dialogue launched

IR UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (International Relations)

Syllabus Linkage	India and Europe; bilateral ties; groupings (**CDRI**, **ISA**, **IPOI**). Prelims pointer: India–Poland **Strategic Partnership** (**Aug 2024**).
Context	Polish PM **Donald Tusk** visited India (**21–23 Oct 2026**) with about **100 CEOs**; talks with PM **Narendra Modi** on **22 Oct** widened cooperation in defence, space, nuclear energy, critical minerals and coal gasification.
Key Facts	■ Bilateral trade ~**US$6 billion**; target: **double by 2030**. ■ New **Defence Industry Dialogue** and **counter-terrorism dialogue**; mid-term review of **Action Plan 2024–28** endorsed. ■ Poland to join **CDRI**; invited to **ISA**, **Global Biofuels Alliance** and **IPOI**. ■ Poland backs India's **UNSC non-permanent seat (2028–29)**.
Way Fwd	Use Poland as a Central European hub for defence co-production and manufacturing, and as a gateway to the EU market once the **India–EU FTA** is in force.
Concept	**CDRI** — launched by India at the UN Climate Action Summit, **2019**; secretariat **New Delhi**. History: Jam Saheb **Digvijaysinhji** of Nawanagar ('Good Maharaja') sheltered **over 600 Polish children** in WWII; PM Modi's **Aug 2024** visit was the first by an Indian PM in **45 years**.

India–Poland (22 Oct 2026): Key Outcomes

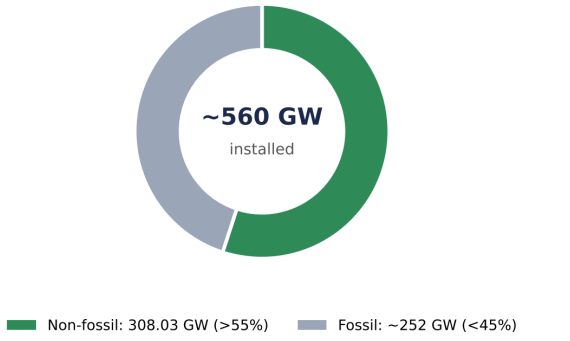


AgriVoltaics World Conference 2026 in New Delhi — 'One land, two harvests'

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

Syllabus Linkage	Renewable energy, farm income, climate commitments. Prelims pointer: **PM-KUSUM** components A/B/C; **ISA** HQ **Gurugram**.
Context	The **7th AgriVoltaics World Conference** (**21–23 Oct 2026**, **Bharat Mandapam**) — the first held in the Global South — was hosted by **MNRE** with Germany's environment ministry; an agrivoltaic programme is planned under the next phase of **PM-KUSUM**.
Key Facts	■ Theme: '**Powering the Global South**'; **1,200+** delegates. ■ Agrivoltaics = **solar PV + crops on the same land** (elevated, inter-row, greenhouse, aquavoltaic). ■ ~**47.5 Mha** cropland technically suitable (~**30%** of cropland); elevated systems cost **25–30%** more. ■ Reported (site-specific) gains: yield **+10–20%**, water use ~**30%** lower.
Way Fwd	Aggregate small holdings via FPOs/cooperatives and set crop-yield safeguards (like Germany's **DIN SPEC 91434**) so that it stays 'farming first, solar second'.
Concept	**PM-KUSUM (2019)**: A = up to **2 MW** grid-connected plants on farmland; B = standalone solar pumps; C = solarisation of grid pumps (incl. **feeder-level**). Central aid **30%** (**50%** for NE, **hill States like Uttarakhand**, islands). **Panchamrit (COP26)**: **500 GW** non-fossil by 2030; **net zero 2070**.

India's Power Capacity Mix (Oct 2026)



2030 NDC goal of 50% non-fossil already crossed • next: 500 GW by 2030

ISRO to launch NVS-03 on GSLV Mk II on 30 October to restore NavIC

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

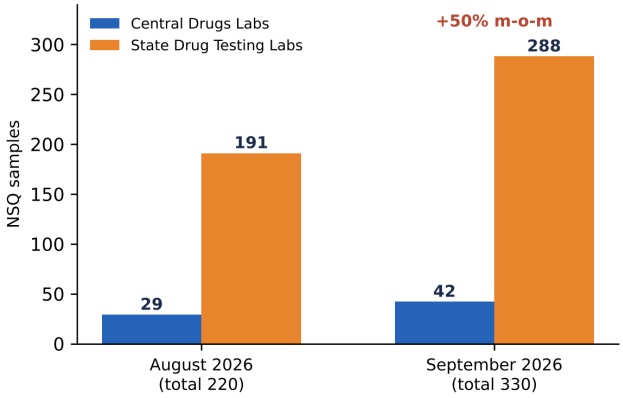
Syllabus Linkage	Space technology, satellite navigation, strategic self-reliance. Prelims pointer: NavIC bands **L1, L5, S**; coverage **India + 1,500 km**.
Context	ISRO will launch **NVS-03** — third of five second-generation NavIC satellites — on **GSLV Mk II** from **Sriharikota** on **30 Oct 2026**, restoring the minimum **four** working satellites needed for standalone positioning.
Key Facts	■ Only **3** NavIC satellites working now: **IRNSS-1B, IRNSS-1I, NVS-01**. ■ **NVS-02** (Jan 2025) failed to reach orbit — a **pyro valve** did not fire. ■ NVS-03: ~**2,250 kg**, **I-2K** bus, ~**3 kW**, **rubidium atomic clocks**, **geosynchronous** orbit. ■ **L1** band suits common smartphone chips; encrypted **Restricted Service** for the armed forces.
Way Fwd	Expedite NVS-04/05, fully indigenise atomic clocks and mandate NavIC support in phones and vehicle trackers.
Concept	**NavIC** (earlier **IRNSS**) = India's regional **GNSS**. A receiver solves 4 unknowns (x, y, z, clock error) ⇒ **minimum 4 satellites**. Others: **GPS** (USA), **GLONASS** (Russia), **Galileo** (EU), **BeiDou** (China), **QZSS** (Japan, regional).

CDSCO flags 330 'Not of Standard Quality' drug samples in September; one spurious

HEALTH UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Governance & Health)

Syllabus Linkage	Health governance, drug regulation, consumer safety. Prelims pointer: **CDSCO** under the **Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940**.
Context	In its September 2026 monthly surveillance the **Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation** flagged **330** NSQ samples and **1** spurious sample (from **Delhi**) — up from **220** NSQ in August.
Key Facts	■ Split: **42** from Central Drugs Laboratories + **288** from State Drugs Testing Laboratories. ■ August: **220** NSQ (**29** central + **191** state) → September **up 50%**. ■ Spurious drug made by unauthorised makers using another firm's **brand name**; under investigation. ■ NSQ applies only to the **tested batch**; lists are published **monthly**.
Way Fwd	Strengthen state drug labs — vital for Uttarakhand's pharma clusters at **Haridwar** and **Selaqui** — and enforce revised **Schedule M** GMP with QR-code track-and-trace.
Concept	**NSQ** = fails one or more quality tests; **spurious** = fake/imitation; **adulterated** = contaminated. **CDSCO** is headed by the **DCGI** under the **Union Health Ministry**.

CDSCO: 'Not of Standard Quality' Drug Samples



Navy in two oceans: SIMBEX-2026 at Visakhapatnam, IBSAMAR IX off South Africa

DEFENCE UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Security & International Relations)

Syllabus Linkage	Defence exercises, maritime security, Act East and Africa outreach. Prelims pointer: match **exercise ↔ partner**.
Context	The **33rd SIMBEX** (India–Singapore) is under way at **Visakhapatnam** (**21–26 Oct**), while **IBSAMAR IX** (India–Brazil–South Africa) ended at **Simon's Town** on **20 Oct**.
Key Facts	■ SIMBEX began in **1994** as **'Exercise Lion King'**; India: **INS Nilgiri** (Project 17A), **INS Kamorta** (Project 28); Singapore: **RSS Supreme**. ■ Sea phase in the **Bay of Bengal** (**24–26 Oct**): anti-submarine, anti-surface and anti-air drills. ■ IBSAMAR IX: India fielded **INS Tarkash** (Talwar-class frigate); series began **2008**. ■ **IBSA** formed by the **Brasilia Declaration, 6 June 2003**; IBSA Fund (**2004**).
Way Fwd	Keep a regular cadence and add underwater domain awareness, vital as extra-regional survey vessels increase in the Indian Ocean.
Concept	**MAHASAGAR** (2025) succeeded **SAGAR** (2015) as India's maritime vision; **Eastern Naval Command** HQ = **Visakhapatnam**; **Cape Agulhas** marks the Atlantic–Indian Ocean boundary (IHO).

SECTION D | PRELIMS RAPID-FIRE

1	**UNESCO Tentative List** (20 Oct): **Baratang** karst–mud-volcano complex, **Andaman Subduction Volcanoes** (Barren & Narcondam) and **Sirpur** (Chhattisgarh) added.
2	Rupee fell **44 paise** to **94.82/US$** on 22 Oct; **Brent** near **US$112** on West Asia tensions.
3	Uttarakhand Assembly session at **Bhararisain (Gairsain)** from **27 Oct**; Speaker **Ritu Khanduri Bhushan**.
4	India's fish production: **197.75 lakh tonnes** (2024–25), inland share **151.60 lakh tonnes**.
5	**12th BRICS Parliamentary Forum** at **Samvidhan Sadan**, New Delhi on **26–27 Oct**.
6	**Sheetal Devi** won **two golds** in compound archery at the **Asian Para Games, Aichi-Nagoya**.

SECTION E | PRACTICE CORNER — UKPSC Pattern

Q1. (Prelims)
With reference to the Uniform Civil Code of Uttarakhand, consider the following statements: 1. It came into force on 27 January 2025. 2. Scheduled Tribes of the State are exempt from its application. 3. Registration of live-in relationships under it is optional. Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 only
(b) 1 and 2 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) — The UCC took effect on **27 Jan 2025** and **exempts Scheduled Tribes**; registration of live-in relationships is **mandatory**, with penalties for non-registration, so statement 3 is wrong.

Q2. (Prelims)
Which one of the following pairs of a Char Dham shrine and its winter seat is NOT correctly matched?
(a) Kedarnath — Ukhimath
(b) Badrinath — Joshimath (Pandukeshwar)
(c) Gangotri — Mukhba
(d) Yamunotri — Guptkashi

Answer: (d) — Yamunotri's deity moves to **Kharsali** in winter; **Guptkashi** is in Rudraprayag on the Kedarnath route. Kedarnath → **Ukhimath** (Omkareshwar temple), Gangotri → **Mukhba**.

Mains Practice Question (GS)
Record pilgrim footfall in the Char Dham Yatra is both an economic opportunity and an ecological risk for Uttarakhand. Discuss measures for sustainable pilgrimage management in the Himalayan State. (UKPSC Mains, 200 words)

Hint: Intro: **60 lakh+** pilgrims in 2026. Body: gains (livelihoods, homestays, reverse palayan) vs risks (fragile slopes, waste, **2013 Kedarnath** disaster, Joshimath subsidence). Measures: **carrying capacity** caps via registration, slot booking, landslide early warning, waste & sanitation, **winter yatra**, green transport. Conclude with 'eco-sensitive pilgrimage'.

ONE-LINE REVISION: UCC Rules 2026 + **25** Cabinet decisions | Coaching cap **₹8 lakh** | Char Dham **60 lakh+** | NVS-03 on **30 Oct** | India–Poland trade **×2 by 2030** | **330** NSQ drugs

Compiled & simplified by the **StudyForGS.com** Research Team
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