

TODAY AT A GLANCE — 10 THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Badrinath Dham crosses **17.79 lakh** pilgrims — all-time record.
- Char Dham Yatra **second phase** on after monsoon (from **15 Sept**).
- Kedarnath trek reopens after **Chirbasa landslide**.
- Uttarakhand tightens **homestay policy** for resident-led rural tourism.
- **UCC 2026 amendments** refine marriage, divorce & live-in rules.
- **Nomadic Elephant 2026** (India-Mongolia) begins at **Pithoragarh**.
- Supreme Court: no one can be **forced to sing** the National Song.
- **SEMICON India 2026** draws **~Rs 1 lakh crore** commitments.
- **55 of 100** fastest-growing cities globally are Indian.
- India's **non-fossil power tops 54%**; NDC on track.

SECTION A — UTTARAKHAND SPECIAL

State schemes • policy • disaster/ecology • economy

Badrinath Dham Sets All-Time Record: 17.79 Lakh Pilgrims in 2026 Season

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

BADRINATH DHAM 2026 • CHAR DHAM YATRA SNAPSHOT

17.79 L

Pilgrims (record)

153

Days of yatra

15 Sep

2nd phase from

04

Char Dham shrines

Syllabus Linkage	Uttarakhand geography & economy; pilgrimage tourism and crowd management; state-specific Prelims (Char Dham, temple towns).
Context	Badrinath Dham has crossed 17.79 lakh pilgrims in 2026 — its highest-ever footfall — as the Char Dham Yatra's second phase gathers pace after the monsoon.
Key Facts	● Badrinath footfall: 17,79,805 pilgrims as of 22 September 2026, first time above 17 lakh. ● Season opened 23 April 2026; figure reached over 153 days; ~1.5–2 months of yatra remain. ● Second phase of the yatra resumed from 15 September 2026 after monsoon disruptions. ● Char Dham = Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath, Badrinath — all in the Garhwal Himalayas. ● Thrust on pilgrim facilities, health services and security; Badrinath being redeveloped as a planned shrine.
Way Fwd	Real-time crowd-cap registration, weather-linked slot management and all-weather road resilience are key to safe, sustainable high-volume pilgrimage.
Concept	Char Dham lies in the Higher Himalayas ; Badrinath is on the Alaknanda (Chamoli) and Kedarnath on the Mandakini (Rudrapurayag); linked by the Char Dham All-Weather Road.

Kedarnath Trek Reopens After Chirbasa Landslide; Monsoon Risk Persists

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

UTTARAKHAND HIMALAYAN DISASTER-MANAGEMENT CHAIN



Legal basis: Disaster Management Act, 2005 • Uttarakhand in Seismic Zones IV & V

Syllabus Linkage	Disaster management in the Himalayas; landslides, cloudbursts, GLOF; Uttarakhand physical geography.
Context	The Kedarnath trekking route reopened in mid-September 2026 after a fatal landslide at Chirbasa, underscoring the fragility of Himalayan pilgrim routes during an extended monsoon.
Key Facts	● Landslide struck near Chirbasa on the Kedarnath foot route; trek later restored after clearance. ● The 2026 monsoon repeatedly blocked Badrinath & Kedarnath highways; rivers ran in spate. ● Uttarakhand lies in Seismic Zones IV & V and is highly landslide-prone. ● Nodal body: Uttarakhand SDMA (USDMA); district response via DDMAs. ● GLOF (glacial lake outburst flood) risk rising with warming; early-warning being expanded.
Way Fwd	Slope stabilisation, GLOF early-warning, weather-gated yatra slots and relocation of vulnerable settlements can cut disaster losses.
Concept	GLOF : sudden release of water from a glacial lake; landslides depend on slope, rainfall & lithology; the DM Act, 2005 sets the NDMA-SDMA-DDMA structure.

Uttarakhand Revamps Homestay Policy to Push Rural, Resident-Led Tourism

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

Syllabus Linkage	State tourism policy; rural livelihoods; migration (palayan) prevention; homestay & B&B schemes.
Context	Uttarakhand has tightened homestay rules to favour permanent residents running units from their own homes, redirecting commercial operators to the Bed & Breakfast track and promoting community tourism.
Key Facts	● ~6,000 homestays registered; Nainital leads, then Dehradun & Pithoragarh. ● Homestays now restricted to permanent residents operating from their own homes. ● Registration renewal every 5 years (earlier one-time). ● Non-residents / caretaker-run units shifted to the Bed & Breakfast scheme. ● Aims to curb palayan (out-migration) and spread tourism to villages.
Way Fwd	Linking homestays to GI products, treks and 'Vibrant Villages' can build hill livelihoods and reverse migration.
Concept	Palayan = out-migration from hill villages; the Rural Development & Migration Prevention (Palayan) Commission tracks it; homestays are a livelihood-diversification tool.

India-Mongolia Drill 'Nomadic Elephant 2026' Begins in Pithoragarh

DEFENCE
UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Defence & IR — Uttarakhand venue)

Syllabus Linkage	India's defence exercises; IR (Mongolia, 'third neighbour'); Uttarakhand as a strategic border state.
Context	The 18th edition of the India-Mongolia joint military exercise Nomadic Elephant began on 21 September 2026 at Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand, focusing on mountain warfare, drones and cyber security.
Key Facts	● 18th edition; held 21 Sept - 3 Oct 2026 at Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand. ● 45 personnel each side; the Indian contingent is from the Arunachal Scouts. ● Focus: counter-insurgency in mountainous terrain, drones & cyber security under a UN mandate. ● Reflects Mongolia's 'Third Neighbour' policy toward India. ● Pithoragarh borders Tibet (China) & Nepal — strategically sensitive.
Way Fwd	Regular high-altitude joint drills boost interoperability and India's Himalayan border preparedness.
Concept	Mongolia is a landlocked 'third neighbour' partner; Pithoragarh sits on the Kailash-Mansarovar (Lipulekh) route in the trans-Himalaya.

Uttarakhand Strengthens Uniform Civil Code With 2026 Amendments

POLITY
UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Polity & Governance)

UTTARAKHAND UCC — KEY PILLARS

Uniform rules for all (ST exempt)



Syllabus Linkage	Article 44 (DPSP); UCC; personal laws; live-in registration; state legislation.
Context	Uttarakhand — the first state to implement a UCC — has brought 2026 amendments refining rules on marriage, divorce, inheritance and live-in registration, and expanded its UCC portal.
Key Facts	● Uttarakhand became the first state to implement a UCC (rules notified 27 January 2025). ● UCC Amendment / Ordinance 2026 refined marriage, divorce, succession & live-in registration rules. ● Applies uniform rules across communities (Scheduled Tribes exempted). ● Backed by Article 44 (Directive Principles) — non-justiciable. ● Online portal ucc.uk.gov.in handles registrations.
Way Fwd	Smooth grievance redress, privacy safeguards for live-in data and public awareness will shape UCC's credibility and replication.
Concept	Article 44 : State shall endeavour to secure a UCC. Rooted in Constituent Assembly debate (23 Nov 1948, draft Art. 35); Goa already had a common civil code.

SECTION B — DATA POINT OF THE DAY

DATA POINT OF THE DAY

Uttarakhand Budget 2026-27

Rs 1.11 lakh crore

The FY 2026-27 state budget is about **Rs 1,11,000 crore**, with thrust on villages, women, education, justice (UCC & fast-track courts) and hill infrastructure.

Uttarakhand Budget 2026-27 — Thrust Areas



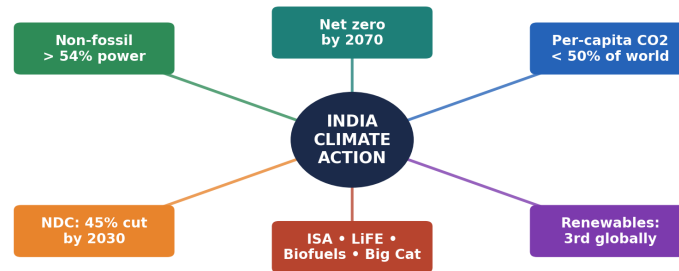
Villages & Infrastructure
 Women & Social Welfare
 Education & Health
 Justice & UCC
 Other

SECTION C — NATIONAL & WORLD

Polity • economy • sci-tech • IR • environment

India: Non-Fossil Sources Cross 54% of Installed Power Capacity

ENVIRONMENT UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Environment & Ecology)



Syllabus Linkage	Climate change; NDCs; renewable energy; India's climate diplomacy.
Context	At an environment-and-climate conference, India highlighted that non-fossil sources now exceed 54% of installed electricity capacity — meeting COP-21 commitments ahead of schedule.
Key Facts	● Non-fossil > 54% of installed power capacity. ● Per-capita emissions < 50% of the global average. ● Wind capacity tripled in ~12 years; India 3rd in renewables globally. ● Updated NDC (2022): 45% emissions-intensity cut by 2030; net zero by 2070. ● Leads ISA, Global Biofuels Alliance, Big Cat Alliance & Mission LiFE.
Way Fwd	Grid storage, green hydrogen and a just transition will sustain the clean-energy shift.
Concept	NDC = Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement; emissions intensity = CO2 per unit GDP; ISA HQ is at Gurugram.

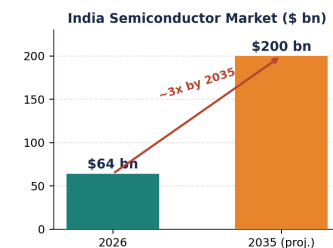
SC: State May Prescribe National Song but Can't Force Anyone to Sing It

POLITY UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Polity & Constitution)

Syllabus Linkage	Fundamental Rights (Art 19, 25); freedom of speech & conscience; national symbols.
Context	The Supreme Court held that while the State may define or promote the National Song, it cannot penalise those who respectfully decline to sing it, reaffirming freedom of conscience.
Key Facts	● A three-judge Bench (CJI-led) ruled on the National Song question. ● Reaffirmed Bijoe Emmanuel v. State of Kerala (1986) — silent, respectful objection is protected. ● Grounded in Articles 19(1)(a) & 25 (speech & conscience). ● Heard a challenge to the Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Act, 2026. ● Distinguished State promotion from compelled speech.
Way Fwd	Balancing national symbols with individual liberty needs clear, non-coercive guidelines.
Concept	Vande Mataram (Bankim Chandra) is the National Song; Jana Gana Mana is the National Anthem. Fundamental Duty 51A(a) is to respect national symbols.

SEMICON India 2026: ~Rs 1 Lakh Crore Pledged; Market Eyeing \$200 Billion by 2035

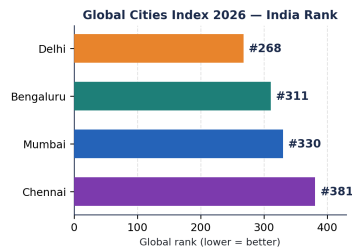
SCI-TECH UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Science-Tech & Economy)



Syllabus Linkage	Semiconductors; India Semiconductor Mission; electronics manufacturing; Atmanirbhar Bharat.
Context	The 5th SEMICON India, held at Yashobhoomi in New Delhi, drew about Rs 1 lakh crore in investment commitments as India scales up its chip ecosystem.
Key Facts	● 5th edition; theme 'Silicon to Systems'; by MeitY with SEMI. ● India's semiconductor market projected \$64 bn (2026) → \$200 bn (2035). ● 56 MoUs across design, fabrication, packaging, AI & HPC. ● ~Rs 1 lakh crore investment commitments under Semicon 2.0. ● 'Odisha Silicon Valley' planned at Naraj, Cuttack.
Way Fwd	Talent pipelines, water/power reliability and materials supply chains will decide fab success.
Concept	The India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) anchors chip policy; a fab makes wafers, while ATMP/OSAT does assembly-test-packaging.

Global Cities Index 2026: 55 of World's 100 Fastest-Growing Cities Are Indian

REPORT UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Economy & Urbanisation)



Syllabus Linkage	Urbanisation; indices & reports; economic geography; liveability.
Context	A Global Cities Index ranking shows India dominating the world's fastest-growing cities, even as Indian metros rank low on liveability and environment.
Key Facts	● 55 of the top 100 fastest-growing cities are Indian. ● Highest-ranked Indian city: Delhi, 268th (score 57.6/100). ● Bengaluru 311th, Mumbai 330th, Chennai 381st. ● Delhi: Human Capital 13th, but Environment 915th. ● Gap = strong growth/talent vs weak liveability & air quality.
Way Fwd	Investing in air quality, governance and urban services can convert growth into liveability.
Concept	Such indices typically score cities on Economics, Human Capital, Quality of Life, Governance and Environment .

UN Gender Snapshot 2026: Funding for Equality at Lowest Since 2021

REPORT UKPSC: Prelims + Mains (Society & IR)

Syllabus Linkage	Gender & development; SDGs (SDG-5); international reports.
Context	The Gender Snapshot 2026 warns that budgets for gender-equality institutions are shrinking even as women's political representation slowly rises.
Key Facts	● 1 in 4 gender-equality mechanisms saw budget cuts. ● Global equality funding at its lowest since 2021. ● Women in parliaments: 27.4% (up from 22.3% in 2015). ● Six in seven countries are led by men. ● Tied to the SDG-5 (Gender Equality) review.
Way Fwd	Gender-responsive budgeting and protected funding are needed to keep SDG-5 on track.
Concept	SDG-5 targets gender equality by 2030; gender-responsive budgeting allocates funds to close gender gaps.

Canal-Top Solar: Land-Neutral Power With 131 GW National Potential

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

Syllabus Linkage	Renewable energy tech; land & water conservation; PM Surya Sarovar.
Context	Canal-top photovoltaics — solar panels over irrigation canals — are back in focus as a land-neutral, water-saving option with large untapped potential.
Key Facts	● First 1 MW canal-top plant: Narmada canal, Mehsana, Gujarat (2012). ● Saves ~9 million litres water/year per stretch; generates ~1.6 million units/year. ● National potential ~131 GW across canal-top/bank sites. ● Top states: UP, Bihar, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Punjab. ● PM Surya Sarovar Yojana targets 5,000 MW floating solar.
Way Fwd	Standard designs and viability-gap funding can scale canal-top and floating solar.
Concept	CTPV cuts evaporation and saves land; floating solar sits on reservoirs — both raise the land-use efficiency of renewables.

SECTION D — PRELIMS RAPID-FIRE

PRELIMS RAPID-FIRE

1	Badrinath Dham's 2026 footfall crossed 17.79 lakh — its highest ever.	4	Non-fossil sources now exceed 54% of India's installed power capacity.
2	Exercise Nomadic Elephant 2026 (India-Mongolia) is being held at Pithoragarh , Uttarakhand.	5	Uttarakhand was the first state to implement a Uniform Civil Code .
3	India's semiconductor market is projected to reach \$200 billion by 2035 .	6	GST 2.0 (effective 22 Sept 2025) uses slabs of 0%, 5%, 18% & 40% .

SECTION E — PRACTICE CORNER

PRACTICE CORNER

Q1. Consider the following about Exercise Nomadic Elephant 2026: 1) It is a joint military exercise between India and Mongolia. 2) The 2026 edition is being held in Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand. 3) The Indian contingent is drawn from the Arunachal Scouts. Which of the statements are correct?

A) 1 and 2 only B) 2 and 3 only C) 1 and 3 only D) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: D. All three are correct — it is the 18th India-Mongolia drill at Pithoragarh (21 Sept-3 Oct 2026), with the Indian side drawn from the Arunachal Scouts.

Q2. With reference to the Uniform Civil Code (UCC), consider the following: 1) Article 44 is a part of the Fundamental Rights. 2) Uttarakhand was the first Indian state to implement a UCC. 3) The directive on UCC is non-justiciable. Which of the statements are correct?

A) 1 and 2 only B) 2 and 3 only C) 1 and 3 only D) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: B. Article 44 is a Directive Principle (Part IV), so statement 1 is wrong. Uttarakhand implemented the first state UCC (2025) and DPSPs are non-justiciable, so statements 2 and 3 are correct.

Mains Practice

Uttarakhand's Himalayan geography makes it both a spiritual magnet and a disaster hotspot. Discuss the challenges of managing high-volume pilgrimage such as the Char Dham Yatra in an ecologically fragile, disaster-prone state, and suggest a sustainable model. (250 words)

Hint: Cover footfall data & carrying capacity, landslide/GLOF risk, the all-weather road debate, the SDMA framework, tech-based slot & early-warning systems, and an eco-sensitive / GEP approach.

ONE-LINE REVISION: Today: Badrinath hits record 17.79 lakh pilgrims • Nomadic Elephant 2026 at Pithoragarh • UCC 2026 amendments • SEMICON India eyes \$200 bn • India non-fossil power > 54%.

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

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