



# STATE PCS CA CONSOLIDATION

# UTTARAKHAND



**APRIL  
2025**



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641, Mukherjee Nagar,  
Opp. Signature  
View Apartment,  
New Delhi



21,  
Pusa Road,  
Karol Bagh  
New Delhi



Tashkent Marg,  
Civil Lines,  
Prayagraj,  
Uttar Pradesh



Tonk Road,  
Vasundhara Colony,  
Jaipur,  
Rajasthan



Burlington Arcade Mall,  
Burlington Chauraha,  
Vidhan Sabha Marg,  
Lucknow



12, Main AB Road,  
Bhawar Kuan,  
Indore,  
Madhya Pradesh

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## Shiva idol Leaves for Kedarnath Shrine

### Why in News?

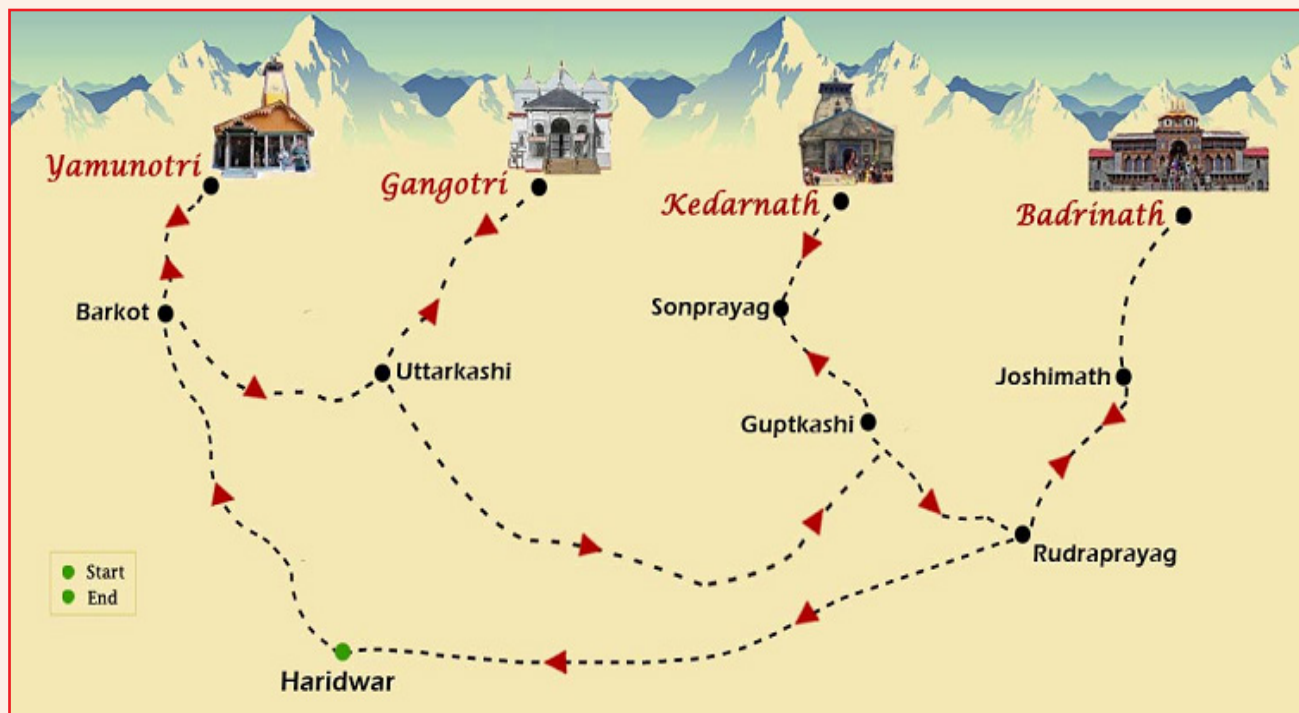
The idol of Lord Shiva, adorned with flowers and carried in a palanquin, left its winter abode in Ukhimath for the Kedarnath shrine, which will reopen to devotees on 2 May 2025.

### Key Points

#### 💡 The Ritual:

- ✦ Before Kedarnath temple reopens in summer, a key ritual involves shifting the idol of Lord Shiva from Ukhimath's Shri Omkareshwar Temple, where he is worshipped during winter back to the Kedarnath shrine.
- ✦ The **Panchmukhi Doli**, a five-faced palanquin carrying Lord Shiva's idol, undertakes its traditional journey to Kedarnath with scheduled halts at **Guptkashi**, **Phata**, and **Gaurikund**.

#### Char Dham Yatra



#### 💡 Yamunotri Dham:

- ✦ **Location:** Uttarkashi district.
- ✦ **Dedicated to:** Goddess Yamuna.
- ✦ River Yamuna is the second-most sacred river in India after River Ganga.

#### 💡 Gangotri Dham:

- ✦ **Location:** Uttarkashi district.
- ✦ **Dedicated to:** Goddess Ganga.
- ✦ Considered the most sacred of all Indian rivers.

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#### 💡 Kedarnath Dham:

- ✦ **Location:** Rudraprayag district.
- ✦ **Dedicated to:** Lord Shiva.
- ✦ Situated on the bank of the **Mandakini River.**
- ✦ One of the **12 Jyotirlingas** (divine representations of Lord Shiva) in India.

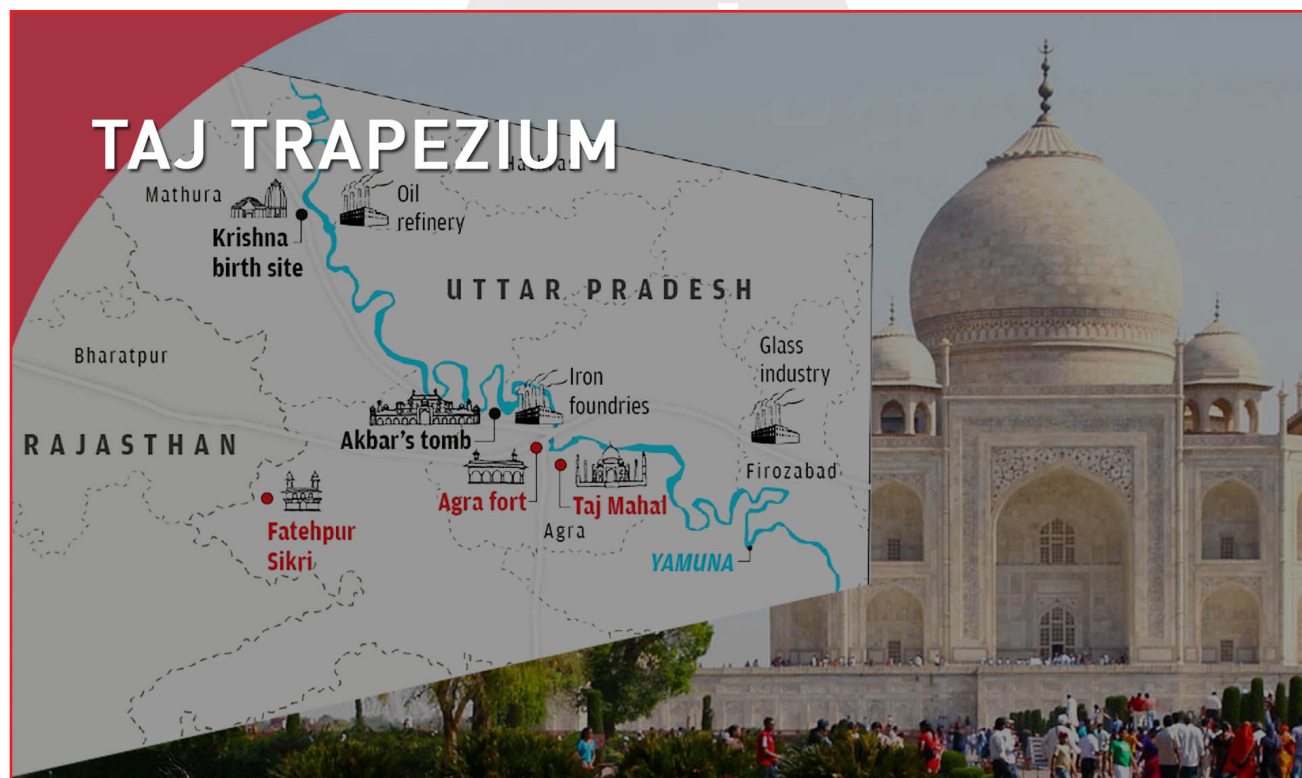
#### 💡 Badrinath Dham:

- ✦ **Location:** Chamoli district.
- ✦ Home to the sacred Badrinarayan Temple.
- ✦ **Dedicated to:** Lord Vishnu.
- ✦ One of the holy shrines for Vaishnavites

## Taj Mahal Conservation Efforts

### Why in News?

The **Supreme Court** of India has directed the **National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI)** to assess the **environmental impact of glass industries on the Taj Mahal.**



### Key Points

#### 💡 About the Court's Instruction:

- ✦ The court directed NEERI to **submit a report along with a timeline** for evaluation.

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- ✦ The court also directed the **Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board** to constitute a special team, which will inspect the affected industries, assess the **pollution level** and submit an interim report.
- ✦ It was clarified that if it is confirmed that glass industries are causing pollution, there will be no hesitation in ordering the shifting of these units.
- ✦ The direction comes in the context of earlier criticism by the **Supreme Court** regarding the environmental protection measures by the **Taj Trapezium Zone (TTZ) Authority**.

#### 💡 Taj Trapezium Zone (TTZ):

- ✦ This is a designated area of 10,400 square km around the Taj Mahal to protect it from **pollution**.
- ✦ The TTZ comprises several monuments, including three **World Heritage Sites** (Taj Mahal, Agra Fort and Fatehpur Sikri).
  - ✍ It is named so due to its trapezoidal shape.
- ✦ Industries under this zone are **classified into red, orange, green and white** categories depending on the level of pollution.
- ✦ The TTZ framework is **responsible for pollution control, air quality monitoring** and ensuring the long-term preservation of the Taj Mahal's environmental integrity.

#### 💡 Taj Mahal:

- ✦ Construction:
  - ✍ The Taj Mahal was built by the **Mughal emperor Shah Jahan** in memory of his wife Mumtaz Mahal.
  - **Ustad Ahmad Lahori** is considered its chief architect.
  - ✍ Its **construction began in 1632 AD** and was completed in 1648 AD.
  - ✍ It was built by artisans from the Mughal Empire, Central Asia, and Iran.
- ✦ Location and Structure:
  - ✍ Taj Mahal is situated on the right bank of **Yamuna** in Agra, Uttar Pradesh. It is enclosed within a **17-hectare Mughal garden** which follows the Timurid-Persian Charbagh layout with **four subdivided quarters**.

- ✍ **Constructed with brick-in-lime mortar, red sandstone, and white marble** (quarried from Makrana (Rajasthan) for the main structure).
- It had extensive inlay work using gemstones like jade, crystal, turquoise, lapis lazuli, etc.
- ✍ The tomb chamber is **octagonal** with four additional corner rooms and a central space containing the tombs of **Mumtaz Mahal and Shah Jahan**.
- Real graves lie in the lower crypt, following Mughal tradition.
- ✍ The tomb's structure forms a **chamfered square**, giving it eight sides with deep recessed arches.
- ✦ UNESCO World Heritage Recognition:
  - ✍ In 1983, **UNESCO** inscribed the Taj Mahal on the World Heritage List under Criterion (i), **recognizing it as a masterpiece of human creative genius**.
  - It is one of the famous **Seven Wonders of the World**.
- ✦ Conservation and Management:
  - ✍ The Taj Mahal was declared a **centrally protected monument of national importance in the year 1920**.
  - ✍ It is managed by the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)**.
  - ✍ It is protected under the **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958** and the **1959 Rules** and is enclosed within TTZ.

#### National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI)

- 💡 NEERI, established in 1958 at Nagpur, is a **premier research institute** under the **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)**, functioning under the **Ministry of Science and Technology**.
  - ✦ It plays a vital role in environmental management, pollution control and sustainable development through research and development, policy development and technological innovation.
- 💡 Headquartered in Nagpur, NEERI **operates five regional laboratories** located in Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, and Mumbai.

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## SEFCO-2025

### Why in News?

The **Council of Scientific & Industrial Research-Indian Institute of Petroleum (CSIR-IIP)**, Dehradun is hosting the International Conference “**Shaping the Energy Future: Challenges and Opportunities**” (SEFCO-2025) from 23- 25 April 2025.

### Key Points

#### About SEFCO:

- ✦ CSIR-IIP organized the **first edition of the SEFCO Conference in 2017**.
- ✦ It aims to contribute to the **development of a sustainable energy future** by addressing the challenges and opportunities in the energy and chemical sector.
- ✦ The **2025 edition** marks the **7th SEFCO Conference** and has expanded into an international event.
- ✦ The **theme for SEFCO-2025** is “**Catalysing a Sustainable Future with Affordable Energy and Chemicals**.”

#### Key Features of SEFCO-2025:

- ✦ The three-day international conference features talks from distinguished national and international experts, including young scientists and researchers from academia and industry.
- ✦ Over **300 delegates from national and international organizations** are participating in SEFCO-2025.
- ✦ The conference includes an **exhibition showcasing CSIR-IIP's technological innovations and research milestones**.
- ✦ SEFCO-2025 has received strong support from key public and private sector organizations, including:
  - ✦ **Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), Engineers India Limited (EIL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), CRISTOL, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), GAIL, AIRBUS, NRL (Numaligarh Refinery Limited), CPCL, and R L Solutions.**

### Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)

- 💡 CSIR is **one of the largest research and development (R&D) organisations**, established in 1942.
  - ✦ It is funded by the **Ministry of Science and Technology** and it operates as an autonomous body through the **Societies Registration Act, 1860**.
- 💡 CSIR covers a broad range of fields from **radio and space physics, oceanography**, and geophysics to **biotechnology, nanotechnology, mining, aeronautics**, environmental engineering, and **information technology**.

## FSSAI Promotes Healthier Diet Along Char Dham Yatra

### Why in News?

The **Uttarakhand government**, in collaboration with the **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)**, has launched a campaign to **sensitize food vendors and eateries** along the **Char Dham Yatra** route to **reduce the use of salt, sugar, and oil** in food.

- 💡 Training workshops **have been held in Uttarkashi, Chamoli, Rudraprayag, Rishikesh, Haridwar, Chamba, and Srinagar**.

### Char Dham Yatra

#### Yamunotri Dham:

- ✦ Location: Uttarkashi district.
- ✦ Dedicated to: Goddess Yamuna.
- ✦ River Yamuna is the second-most sacred river in India after River Ganga.

#### Gangotri Dham:

- ✦ Location: Uttarkashi district.
- ✦ **Dedicated to:** Goddess Ganga.
- ✦ Considered the most sacred of all Indian rivers.

#### Kedarnath Dham:

- ✦ **Location:** Rudraprayag district.
- ✦ **Dedicated to:** Lord Shiva.
- ✦ Situated on the bank of the Mandakini River.
- ✦ **One of the 12 Jyotirlingas** (divine representations of Lord Shiva) in India.

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### 💡 **Badrinath Dham:**

- ✦ **Location:** Chamoli district.
- ✦ Home to the sacred Badrinarayan Temple.
- ✦ **Dedicated to:** Lord Vishnu.
- ✦ One of the holy shrines for Vaishnavites.

### Key Points

#### Key Highlights of the Campaign:

##### 💡 **Objective:**

- ✦ To **minimize health risks** (e.g., cardiac arrest, breathing issues) among pilgrims during the Char Dham Yatra by promoting **healthier cooking practices** and dietary habits.
- 📌 It is a part of the **Fit India Movement** and **PM's appeal** for a 10% **reduction in salt**, sugar, and oil consumption.

##### 💡 **Implementation and Monitoring Agencies:**

- ✦ **Food Safety and Drug Administration (FDA)**, Uttarakhand
- ✦ District administration, Uttarakhand

##### 💡 **Dietary Guidelines for Food Vendors:**

- ✦ **Reduce** the use of salt, sugar, and oil in food.
- ✦ **Avoid** papads, pickles, and **MSG (monosodium glutamate) - laden items**.
- 📌 MSG, also known as **Ajinomoto**, is a widely used food additive that enhances flavor, particularly the umami taste.
- It's a **sodium salt of glutamic acid**, an amino acid naturally present in many foods.
- ✦ **Use natural sweeteners** like dates and fruits.

##### 💡 **Medical and Health Arrangements:**

- ✦ **Mandatory health screening** for pilgrims above 50 years of age.
- 📌 In **2024**, a health screening of **9.5 lakh people** was conducted.

### Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)

#### 💡 **About:**

- ✦ FSSAI is an **autonomous statutory body** established under the **Food Safety and Standards Act, of 2006**.
- ✦ FSSAI is responsible for **protecting and promoting public health** by regulating and supervising food safety and quality in India, operating under the **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare**.

- ✦ FSSAI has a **headquarters in New Delhi** and regional offices in eight zones across the country.
- ✦ The Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer of FSSAI, appointed by central government. The Chairperson is in the **rank of Secretary to the Government of India**.

#### 💡 **Functions and Powers:**

- ✦ Framing of **regulations and standards** for food products and additives.
- ✦ Granting of **licences and registration** to food businesses.
- ✦ Enforcement of food safety laws and regulations.
- ✦ **Monitoring and surveillance** of food safety and quality.
- ✦ Conducting **risk assessment and scientific research** on food safety issues.
- ✦ Providing **training and awareness** on food safety and hygiene.
- ✦ Promoting **food fortification** and organic food.
- ✦ Coordinating with other agencies and stakeholders on food safety matters.

#### 💡 **Events and Index:**

- ✦ **World Food Safety Day**
- ✦ **State Food Safety Index.**

## Rishikesh-Karnaprayag Rail Link Project

### Why in News?

On 16 April 2025, the **Union Railway Minister** and **Chief Minister of Uttarakhand** witnessed the breakthrough program of **India's longest rail tunnel at Janasu, Uttarakhand**.

### Key Points

#### 💡 **Part of Rishikesh-Karnaprayag Rail Project:**

- ✦ The 14.57-km-long Tunnel 8 lies between Devprayag and Janasu and forms a key part of the 125-km **Rishikesh-Karnaprayag Broad Gauge Rail Line**.

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✦ This project aims to **enhance connectivity** across five Himalayan districts—**Devprayag, Srinagar, Rudraprayag, Gauchar, and Karnaprayag**.

✦ The project uses **Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) technology** for the first time in mountainous regions of India.

#### 💡 Technical and Logistical Challenges Overcome:

✦ TBM components weighing 165 MT were transported from **Mundra Port** across narrow Himalayan roads and old bridges.

✦ The tunnel passes through **Seismic Zone IV**, demanding advanced design and geological probing due to tectonic activity.

#### 💡 Impact and Broader Significance:

✦ Over 83% of the 125-km alignment runs through tunnels, involving a total of 213 km of tunnelling across main and escape routes.

✦ Once completed, the **project will reduce travel time**, ensure all-weather access, and boost tourism and regional economy in Uttarakhand.

✦ It also represents a major leap toward realising the **Char Dham Rail Connectivity Initiative** under the government's **Viksit Bharat 2047 vision**.

✦ Eliminating unnecessary interference by the government in the lives of citizens and promoting digital economy and governance.

✦ Developing 3-4 global champions in every sector by merger or restructuring and boosting indigenous industry and innovation.

✦ **Becoming self-reliant** in defence and space sectors and enhancing India's role in the world.

✦ **Fostering green growth** and climate action by increasing renewable energy capacity and reducing carbon emissions.

✦ Empowering the youth with skills and education and creating more employment opportunities.

✦ Partnering with foreign R&D organizations to build top 10 labs in the country and bringing at least 10 Indian institutions among the top 100 globally.

## Drive Against Illegal Residents in Uttarakhand

### Why in News?

On 17 April 2025, **Uttarakhand Chief Minister** directed the police to launch a **drive to identify and take action against people living illegally in the state** using fake identification papers.

### Key Points

#### 💡 About the Drive:

✦ The CM also directed to intensify **action against the drug mafia** and all individuals disrupting law and order.

✦ Taking note of **delays in registering First Information Report (FIR)** related to cybercrime, the CM demanded a **status report on actions taken in these cases**.

✦ He urged the police to **strengthen response mechanisms for cybercrime complaints**.

✦ He also called for **improving work culture across all levels of the police department** to enhance public trust and efficiency.

### Vision India@2047

#### 💡 The Project:

✦ Vision India@2047 is a project initiated by the **NITI Aayog**, the apex policy think tank of India, to create a blueprint for India's development in the next 25 years.

✦ The project aims to **make India a global leader in innovation and technology**, a model of human development and social welfare, and a champion of environmental sustainability.

#### 💡 Objectives:

✦ Achieving a **USD 30 trillion economy** with a **per-capita income of USD 18,000-20,000** and strong public finances and a robust financial sector.

✦ **Building world-class infrastructure** and facilities in both rural and urban areas.

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### First Information Report (FIR)

- 💡 It is a **written document** prepared by the police when they receive information about the commission of a **cognizable offence**.
- 💡 It is a report of information that reaches the police first at that point of time and that is why it is called the **First Information Report**.
- 💡 It is generally a complaint lodged with the police by the **victim of a cognizable offence or by someone on his/her behalf**. Anyone can report the commission of a cognizable offence either orally or in writing.
- 💡 There are **three important elements** of an FIR:
  - ✦ The information must relate to the **commission of a cognizable offence**,
  - ✦ It should be given in **writing or orally** to the head of the police station,
  - ✦ It must be written down and **signed by the informant**, and its key points **should be recorded in a daily diary**.

## Silkyara Tunnel in Uttarakhand

### Why in News?

On April 16, 2025, Uttarakhand completed excavation of the 4.53-km **Silkyara Tunnel**, which will be **named after local deity Baba Baukhnag**.

### Key Points

- 💡 **Inauguration of Temple:**
  - ✦ The Chief Minister of the state inaugurated the **Baba Baukhnag temple** at the mouth of the Silkyara Tunnel.
  - ✦ He called the tunnel breakthrough a **symbol of advanced engineering, faith, and dedication**.
  - ✦ The construction of the tunnel was tendered to **Hyderabad-headquartered Navayuga Engineering Company** by the **National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd (NHIDCL)**, a fully owned company of the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, Government of India.

### Char Dham Connectivity and Strategic Importance:

- ✦ The double-lane tunnel, **part of the Char Dham all-weather road project**, is a major infrastructure project.
- ✦ With an estimated cost of Rs 1,384 crore, the **tunnel will cut the distance between Gangotri and Yamunotri by 25 km**, improving regional connectivity.

## Antar Drishti

### Why in News?

On 7th April 2025, the **National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Visual Disabilities (Divyangjan)**, Dehradun, and the **National Association for the Blind (NAB)**, New Delhi, jointly inaugurated 'Antar Drishti'.

### Key Points

#### Objective and Features:

- ✦ 'Antar Drishti' is designed as a **unique sensory dark room** to simulate the daily experiences of **persons with visual impairments**.
- ✦ The facility enables sighted individuals to engage in activities in complete darkness, thereby **promoting empathy and understanding** of the challenges faced by **persons with blindness or low vision**.
- ✦ The initiative aims to **foster inclusion by bridging the perceptual gap** between the general public and the lived experiences of visually impaired individuals.

#### Implementation of the 'Enable Inclusion' App:

- ✦ Through this partnership, NIEPVD will implement the **'Enable Inclusion' App** developed by Amar Seva Sangam for **early detection, intervention, and tracking of children with developmental disabilities**.
- ✦ NIEPVD will integrate its specialization in visual disabilities to enhance the app's accessibility and responsiveness for users with visual impairments.
- ✦ The app will provide **personalized support through tele-counseling, rehabilitation planning, and early intervention**, advancing DEPwD's vision of accessible, inclusive, and tech-driven empowerment for persons with disabilities across India.

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## NIEPVD

- 💡 The **National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Visual Impairment (NIEPVD)**, under **Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD)**, has been working since 1943 for the education, training, rehabilitation, and empowerment of the visually impaired.
- 💡 It **established a Regional Centre in Chennai in 1988** for serving the Southern Region, and coordinates four CRCs at Sundernagar (H.P.), Gorakhpur (U.P.), and Jaipur (Rajasthan) to provide rehabilitation and skill development services for persons with disabilities.

## Other Initiatives for Persons with Disability

- 💡 **Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016:**
  - ✦ It aims to **protect and promote** the rights of **persons with disabilities (PwDs)**.
  - ✦ It aims to give effect to the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)**, which India ratified in **2007**.
  - ✦ A person with a benchmark disability is defined as someone with **at least 40% of a specified disability**.
- 💡 **Unique Disability Identification Portal:**
  - ✦ The project is being implemented with a view of **creating a National Database for persons with disabilities (PwDs)**, and to issue a **Unique Disability Identity Card** to each PwDs.
- 💡 **DeenDayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS):**
  - ✦ DDRS is a **Central Sector Scheme** of Government of India which has been implemented **since 1999** for providing financial assistance to **NGOs working** for education and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities.
- 💡 **National Fellowship for Students with Disabilities:**
  - ✦ It aims to increase opportunities for students with disabilities for pursuing higher education and grants **200 fellowships per year** to students with disabilities.

## Chintan Shivir 2025

## Why in News?

The **Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment** launched the **two-day Chintan Shivir 2025** in **Dehradun, Uttarakhand** to **strengthen Centre-State partnerships** for ensuring social justice for **marginalized communities**.

## Key Points

## Key Focus Areas:

- ✦ The deliberations revolved around four core pillars—education, economic development, social protection, and accessibility.
- ✦ The Department showcased progress in schemes like **Assistance to Disabled Persons (ADIP)**, scholarships for PwDs, skill development, and digital inclusion.
- ✦ States shared best practices such as mobile assessment camps, inclusive school infrastructure, and accessible transportation models.
- ✦ Discussions also covered **Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarships** and **PM-YASASVI**, focusing on marginalised groups.
  - 📎 States **flagged issues** in digital applications, verification systems, and outreach to rural and **tribal communities**.
- ✦ The Ministry urged **adoption of proactive communication** and **grassroots-level mobilisation** to improve scholarship implementation.
- 💡 **Livelihood and Economic Inclusion:**
  - ✦ The Ministry assessed performance of **PM-AJAY** and **SEED**, with states showcasing successful models in asset creation, cluster development, and entrepreneurship.
  - ✦ Discussions focused on modernising **sanitation work, eliminating manual scavenging, and promoting dignity for sanitation workers**—especially women—through technology and inter-agency coordination.

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### PM-YASASVI Scheme

- 💡 **About:** Launched by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, it provides **financial aid** for quality education to **marginalized students**.
- 💡 **Eligibility:** It is open to **OBC, Economically Backward Classes (EBC), and DNT** students with family income up to **Rs 2.5 lakh per annum**.
- 💡 **Sub-Schemes:** It is an **umbrella** scheme consisting of sub-schemes like:
  - ✦ **Pre-Matric Scholarship:** Rs. 4,000 annual academic allowance to families with income below Rs. 2.5 lakh.
  - ✦ **Post-Matric Scholarship:** Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 20,000 depending on the course category.
  - ✦ **College Education:** Top college students get **full financial support**, including tuition, living expenses, and education materials.
  - ✦ **Hostels:** **Accommodation facility** near government schools and institutions.

### SEED

- 💡 The Scheme for Economic Empowerment of Denotified/Nomadic/SemiNomadic (SEED) communities was launched in February 2022 by the **Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment**.
- 💡 It aims to **provide free competitive exam coaching to these students**, to provide health insurance to families, to uplift clusters of these communities through livelihood initiatives, and to provide financial assistance for housing.

## Equine Influenza

### Why in News?

After detecting **equine influenza in horses and mules** in two villages of **Rudraprayag**, the Uttarakhand government has begun taking steps to contain its spread ahead of the **Char Dham Yatra**.

### Key Points

- 💡 **Equine Influenza:** Commonly known as “horse flu,” is a **fast-spreading respiratory illness** affecting horses.
- ✦ The disease is primarily **caused by two subtypes of the influenza A virus** — H3N8 and H7N7.

✍ The virus spreads rapidly through **direct contact with infected animals or contaminated environments**.

- ✦ While equine influenza is rarely fatal, it **can lead to serious complications**, particularly in young foals, including secondary bacterial infections and prolonged respiratory issues.

### Government Response and Action Plan:

- ✦ The Uttarakhand government has initiated **containment measures to prevent the disease from spreading** during the pilgrimage season.
- ✦ The **State Animal Husbandry Minister chaired a review meeting** to assess the situation and guide the response.
  - ✍ The minister directed officials to prioritise the **screening of all horses and mules** before allowing their participation in the yatra.
- ✦ Horses and mules entering Uttarakhand from other states must **carry a valid health certificate and a negative equine influenza test report**.

### Char Dham Yatra Schedule 2025:

- ✦ The Char Dham Yatra is set to begin with the opening of **Yamunotri and Gangotri Dhams** on 30th April 2025.
- ✦ **Kedarnath Dham** will open on 2nd May followed by **Badrinath Dham** on 4th May.

## Vibrant Villages Programme-II (VVP-II)

### Why in News?

The **Union Cabinet**, chaired by PM **Narendra Modi**, approved the **Vibrant Villages Programme-II (VVP-II)** as a **Central Sector Scheme** for FY 2024–25 to 2028–29.

### Key Points

#### About the Scheme:

- ✦ The scheme supports the vision of **Viksit Bharat@2047** for ‘Safe, Secured & Vibrant Land Borders’.
- ✦ It focuses on the **comprehensive development** of villages in blocks **adjoining International Land Borders (ILBs)**, excluding the **Northern border** (already covered under **VVP-I**).

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- ✎ **Total Outlay:** Rs.6,839 crore.
- ✎ **Implementation Period:** Till FY 2028–29.
- ✎ **States/UTs covered:**
  - ✎ Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir (UT), Ladakh (UT), Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal.
- 💡 **Objective of the Scheme:**
  - ✎ To create **better living conditions** in strategic border villages.
  - ✎ To provide **adequate livelihood opportunities** for residents.
  - ✎ To ensure **prosperous and safe international borders**.
  - ✎ To **control trans-border crime** in vulnerable regions.
  - ✎ To **integrate border populations** with the national mainstream.
  - ✎ To enable villagers to serve as **'eyes and ears' of border guarding forces**, enhancing internal security.
- 💡 **Key Provisions under VVP-II:**
  - ✎ **Infrastructure development** in individual villages or village clusters.
  - ✎ **Value chain development** through cooperatives, Self-Help Groups (SHGs), etc.
  - ✎ Border-specific **outreach activities** to engage and empower local communities.
  - ✎ Establishment of **education infrastructure**, including **SMART classes**.
  - ✎ Development of **tourism circuits** to boost local economy and cultural visibility.
  - ✎ Implementation of **projects for diverse and sustainable livelihood opportunities** in border areas.
- 💡 **Implementation Approach:**
  - ✎ **Village Action Plans:** Developed collaboratively, customized to state, village, and border-specific needs
  - ✎ **Road Connectivity:** Via **PMGSY-IV** (under Ministry of Rural Development)
  - ✎ **High-Powered Committee** (chaired by Cabinet Secretary): To allow **relaxations** in implementation guidelines

### 💡 Saturation Focus (Thematic Areas)

- ✎ The programme aims to ensure that **all individuals and households** in the selected villages receive the **full benefits of existing welfare schemes**, by bringing different schemes together.
- ✎ It also plans to fully cover **all villages** in these areas with **four basic services**:
  1. All-weather road connectivity
  2. Telecom connectivity
  3. Television connectivity
  4. Electrification

### 💡 Use of Technology

- ✎ Implementation supported by digital tools like **PM Gati Shakti** platform for integrated planning and tracking

## Reopening of Madrasa in Uttarakhand

### Why in News?

On 3rd April 2025, the **Uttarakhand High Court** ordered the government to **unseal a madrasa**, which officials had sealed for **allegedly operating "illegally,"** provided the institution does not run any school in the building without State government recognition.

### Key Points

#### 💡 Government Action on Madrasas:

- ✎ The State government **shut down over 136 madrasas for allegedly operating without affiliation** and failing to meet madrasa board norms.
- ✎ The state Chief Minister also ordered an inquiry into the funding of these institutions.

#### 💡 High Court's Interim Relief:

- ✎ The court granted **interim relief to Madarsa Enamul Uloom in Dehradun**, allowing its reopening.
- ✎ The madrasa owners challenged the sealing, arguing that they operated a religious school under a registered society and that the State had sealed the premises without legal authority.

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- ✦ The High Court also asked the State government to clarify the legal provisions and procedures followed in sealing the madrasa's property.

#### 💡 Court's Observations on Due Process:

- ✦ The High Court noted that the **madrasa was sealed without a show-cause notice**, and the petitioners were denied a hearing.
- ✦ The court ruled that the property should be unsealed until the next hearing, provided the **petitioners submit an undertaking that they will not operate a madrasa or school** without State government recognition.

#### Madrasas

- 💡 Madrasa is an **Arabic word** for an **educational institution**.
- 💡 Initially, **mosques** served as educational institutions in early Islam, but by the 10th century, madrasas evolved into distinct entities for both religious and secular learning in the Islamic world.
- 💡 The earliest madrasas were found in **Khorasan and Transoxania (modern eastern and northern Iran, central Asia, and Afghanistan)**, with larger institutions providing housing for students, especially those from poor backgrounds.
- 💡 Recognized madrasas are **under state boards**; unrecognized ones follow curricula from major seminaries like **Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama and Darul Uloom Deoband**.

## Naini Lake

### Why in News?

**Naini Lake**, a key attraction in **Nainital**, has reached a **water level of 4.7 feet**, its lowest in five years.

### Key Points

#### 💡 Concerns Over Drinking Water Scarcity:

- ✦ Experts warn that Naini Lake's **water level may drop below the "zero level,"** raising concerns about **drinking water shortages before summer**.

- ✦ The **"zero level"** does not indicate complete drying but **refers to the lake's water falling below its normal gauge level**, determined based on historical data.

#### 💡 Water Extraction and Declining Levels:

- ✦ Naini Lake, with a deepest point of 89 feet, has a gauge level of 12 feet.
- ✦ **Uttarakhand Jal Sansthan** extracts 10 million litres daily to supply drinking water to Nainital.
- ✦ **Reduced snowfall and rainfall during winter**, along with long-term maintenance issues, have contributed to the drop.

#### 💡 Historical and Geographical Significance:

- ✦ Naini Lake is a **natural kidney-shaped lake** surrounded by **seven hills in Nainital**.
- ✦ English businessman **P. Barron discovered it in the mid-19th century**, leading to Nainital's development as a British hill station.

#### 💡 Rising Demand and Impact on the Lake:

- ✦ According to environmental scientists, in 2024 Naini Lake supplied 76% of the city's water.
- ✦ Population growth, **increased tourism**, and **commercial activities** have negatively impacted the lake.

#### 💡 Human-Induced Degradation:

- ✦ A **2017 Uttarakhand State Council for Science and Technology report** found that Naini Lake faces the most human-made disturbances among Kumaon lakes.
  - 📎 Issues include **unplanned construction, encroachments**, and **degradation of recharge zones**.
  - 📎 Concrete structures reduce rainwater infiltration, worsening water shortages in low-rainfall years.
- ✦ Dumping debris into **Sukhatal Lake**, a crucial recharge source, has caused it to shrink from its original two-hectare area.
  - 📎 Encroachments and illegal constructions have reduced the lake's catchment area, with houses and hotels expanding near the lake.

#### 💡 Pollution and Civic Issues:

- ✦ Discharge of untreated wastewater and improper solid waste disposal contribute to **pollution**.

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- ✦ Inadequate sewer systems lead to sewage overflow into stormwater drains, which discharge into the lake.

#### 💡 Changing Weather Patterns and Climate Impact:

- ✦ Climate change has altered weather patterns in Uttarakhand.
- ✦ A **study by Climate Trends** found that between 1970 and 2022, **annual mean temperatures in the state increased by 1.5°C**.
  - 📎 Rising temperatures have affected rainfall and snowfall patterns.
  - 📎 Annual rainfall declined from 2,400 mm in 2022 to 2,000 mm in 2024.
- ✦ Nainital received only 107 mm of rainfall from January to March 2025, lower than in previous years.
- ✦ While the region had four snowfall days in winter 2022, it had none in 2025.
- ✦ Naini Lake reached **zero level only twice in the 1900s** but has **exceeded that mark over ten times since 2000**.

#### 💡 Need for Rejuvenation and Conservation Efforts:

- ✦ Several legal petitions have sought to protect the lake, with a **Supreme Court** ruling in 1993 banning commercial complexes in Nainital.
  - 📎 However, unregulated construction, including homestays and building on **wetlands**, continues.
- ✦ In 2021, concerns were raised about the Sukhatal Lake revamp project, leading to a **Public Interest Litigation (PIL)** in the Uttarakhand High Court.
- ✦ The HC halted construction in November 2022, but work resumed in 2024 under a beautification plan.

## Uttarakhand Renames 18 Places

### Why in News?

Uttarakhand **Chief Minister** announced **change in the names of 18 places** located in Haridwar, Dehradun, Nainital and Udham Singh Nagar districts.

### Key Points

#### 💡 Objective Behind the Name Changes:

- ✦ The Chief Minister stated that the renaming initiative **aims to respect public sentiment and preserve Indian culture and heritage**.
- ✦ He emphasized that the **new names will inspire people by honoring great personalities** who contributed to Indian culture.

#### 💡 Renamed Places:

- ✦ In Haridwar District:
  - 📎 Aurangzebpur (Bhagwanpur block) → Shivaji Nagar
  - 📎 Ghaziwali (Bahadradab block) → Arya Nagar
  - 📎 Chandpur (Bahadradab block) → Jyotiba Phule Nagar
  - 📎 Mohammedpur Jaat (Narsan block) → Mohanpur Jaat

- 📎 Khanpur Kursali (Narsan block) → Ambedkar Nagar
- 📎 Idiripur (Khanpur block) → Nandpur
- 📎 Khanpur (Khanpur block) → Shree Krishnapur
- 📎 Akbarpur Fazalpur (Roorkee) → Vijay Nagar
- ✦ In Dehradun:
  - 📎 Miyanwala → Ramjiwala
  - 📎 Peerwala → Kesri Nagar
  - 📎 Chandpur Khurd → Prithviraj Nagar
  - 📎 Abdulpur → Daksh Nagar
- ✦ In Nainital:
  - 📎 Nawabi Road → Atal Marg
  - 📎 Panchakki to IIT Road → Guru Gowalkar Marg
- ✦ In Udham Singh Nagar:
  - 📎 Sultanpur Patti Nagar Panchayat → Kaushalyapuri



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