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MARCH 2026

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Month at a Glance

Key Uttarakhand developments of March 2026 in chronological order.

Date	Development
5 Mar	Economic Survey 2025-26 released: growth rate 7.23%, per capita income about ₹2.74 lakh
6 Mar	Cabinet approves five Bills incl. Public Gambling Prevention Bill, 2026; online registration for Char Dham Yatra 2026 opens
7 Mar	Union Home Minister Amit Shah launches projects worth ₹1,132 crore at Haridwar; Uttarakhand reported first on NCRB's ICJS 2.0 dashboard (score 93.46)
8 Mar	International Women's Day: 38 women honoured by the CM; IAF-Army joint para-drop exercise over Tehri Lake
9 Mar	Budget 2026-27 (₹1,11,703 crore) presented at Bhararisain (Gairsain) on the day of the Governor's address; Exercise Dharma Guardian concludes at Chaubatia
9-15 Mar	International Yoga Festival held at Rishikesh
10 Mar	Assembly passes 11 Bills incl. Devbhoomi Parivar Bill, UCC (Amendment) Bill and Public Gambling Prevention Bill
10-11 Mar	MoEFCC national workshop on elephant-train collisions at the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun
13 Mar	Budget session adjourned sine die after 41 h 10 min; NITI Aayog's Fiscal Health Index 2026 places Uttarakhand 2nd among NE & Himalayan States
14-15 Mar	Phool Dei, the children's spring festival, celebrated; Governor marks it at Lok Bhavan
17 Mar	Real-time health monitoring of Char Dham pilgrims through the 'e-Swasthya Dham' portal announced
20 Mar	Five ministers sworn in at Lok Bhavan; Council of Ministers reaches its maximum strength of 12
22 Mar	Portfolios allocated to ministers; ₹50.27 crore sanctioned for Kumbh Command & Control Centre-2, Haridwar
23 Mar	Dhami government completes four years; 74 schemes worth ₹401.86 crore launched in Dehradun
24 Mar	World TB Day: Governor launches 100-day intensive TB eradication campaign
25 Mar	Cabinet approves Veer Udyami Yojana and wheat procurement at ₹2,585/quintal; Governor launches 'Pragyanam' AI chatbot
26 Mar	Dehradun-Pithoragarh flight begins (UDAN); working group formed for high-risk glacial lakes; State Tribal Festival in Dehradun
28 Mar	CM seeks ₹143.96 crore from MeitY for 'Digital Kumbh 2027' and raises rail projects with the Union Minister
30 Mar	Dr Jiten Thakur receives the Uttarakhand Sahitya Bhushan Samman
31 Mar	MoRTH sanctions ₹1,105.79 crore for the 12.67 km four-lane Rishikesh bypass on NH-7

01

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

State Cabinet Decisions



1.1 Cabinet Meeting of 6 March 2026 — Five Bills Approved

WHY IN NEWS Ahead of the budget session, the cabinet chaired by Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami approved five Bills, all of which were later passed by the Assembly at Bhararisain on 10 March.

Decision	Key details
Uttarakhand Public Gambling Prevention Bill, 2026	To replace the colonial Public Gambling Act, 1867 in the state; punishment ranges from 3 months to 5 years' imprisonment and fines from ₹5,000 to ₹10 lakh (details in 2.3).
Uttarakhand Minority Commission (Amendment) Bill, 2026	Tenure of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and members reduced from 5 years to 3 years . The Commission was set up in 2002.
Uttarakhand Language Institute (Amendment) Bill, 2026	A Nepali Academy added to the academies functioning under the Uttarakhand Bhasha Sansthan Act, 2018.
Public Services (Reservation) Amendment Bill, 2026	Gives statutory form to the Personnel Department order of 22 May 2020 on reservation benefits for ex-servicemen in state services.
Uttarakhand Private Universities (Amendment) Bill, 2026	Adds new private universities (reported as Mount Valley, Tulaj and Shivalik universities) under the Private Universities Act.

1.2 Cabinet Meeting of 25 March 2026 — 16 Proposals Approved

WHY IN NEWS The first full meeting of the cabinet after its expansion on 20 March approved a new entrepreneurship scheme for ex-servicemen and Agniveers, the wheat procurement plan and several service-rule changes.

Decision	Key details
Veer Udyami Yojana	New scheme for ex-servicemen and ex-Agniveers ; 10% of the Mukhyamantri Swarozgar Yojana quota reserved for them; capital subsidy of 15–30% depending on project cost and hill/plain location; an additional 5% subsidy where both husband and wife are eligible.
Wheat procurement, Rabi 2026-27	Procurement at the MSP of ₹2,585 per quintal ; target 2.2 lakh metric tonnes; mandi fee of 2% on purchases at MSP.
Recruitment norms	Existing age and height standards to continue for three more years in uniformed posts (police, PAC, fire service, forest guards).
SETU Aayog	Organisational structure approved for SETU (State Institute for Empowering and Transforming Uttarakhand), which replaced the State Planning Commission in 2023 on the NITI Aayog model.
Judicial officers	Soft vehicle loan up to ₹10 lakh — 4% interest for electric vehicles, 5% for others.
PM Surya Ghar (rooftop solar)	State subsidy allowed for installations completed by 31 March 2025.

KNOW THE TERMS

- **MSP** — Minimum Support Price announced by the Centre on the recommendation of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP); ₹2,585/quintal is the wheat MSP for Rabi Marketing Season 2026-27.
- **SETU Aayog** — Uttarakhand's policy think-tank; the Chief Minister is its Chairperson. It replaced the State Planning Commission in 2023, modelled on NITI Aayog (2015) at the Centre.
- **Agniveer** — a soldier recruited for four years under the Agnipath scheme (2022); the state already gives ex-Agniveers 10% horizontal reservation in specified posts.



02

POLITY

State Legislature: Budget Session & New Laws



2.1 Budget Session at Bhararisain (Gairsain), 9–13 March 2026

WHY IN NEWS The budget session of the Uttarakhand Legislative Assembly was held at the Vidhan Bhavan in Bhararisain, Gairsain — the state's summer capital — and ended after five sittings.

Venue	Vidhan Bhavan, Bhararisain (Gairsain), Chamoli — summer capital
Duration	9–13 March 2026; 5 sittings, 41 hours 10 minutes
A first	The Budget was presented on the same day as the Governor's address (9 March) — also the first budget presented by CM Dhami as Finance Minister
Budget passed	₹1,11,703 crore for 2026-27 (see 4.1)
Legislation	12 Bills passed (including the Appropriation Bill); 4 ordinances laid
Questions	545 starred and 50 short-notice questions received; 291 answered
Also tabled	Economic Survey 2025-26 and CAG reports

Bills passed on 10 March 2026

#	Bill	Purpose / key point
1	Devbhoomi Parivar Bill, 2026	Family ID for every resident family (see 2.2)
2	Public Gambling Prevention Bill, 2026	Replaces the Public Gambling Act, 1867 (see 2.3)
3	Uniform Civil Code (Amendment) Bill, 2026	Replaces the UCC Amendment Ordinance of January 2026 (see 2.4)
4	Minority Commission (Amendment) Bill, 2026	Tenure of office-bearers cut from 5 to 3 years
5	Language Institute (Amendment) Bill, 2026	Nepali Academy added
6	Public Services (Reservation for the Physically Handicapped, Dependents of Freedom Fighters and Ex-Servicemen) Amendment Bill, 2026	Statutory backing to ex-servicemen reservation order of 2020
7	Private Universities (Amendment) Bill, 2026	New private universities
8	Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2026	Alignment with the Central GST law
9	Shops and Establishments (Amendment) Bill, 2026	Employment regulation and service conditions
10	Prisons and Correctional Services (Amendment) Bill, 2026	Prison administration
11	Public Trust (Amendment) Bill, 2026	Administration of public trusts

GAIRSAIN — BACKGROUND

- Gairsain (Chamoli) was declared the **summer capital** of Uttarakhand on 8 June 2020; Dehradun remains the interim/winter capital.
- The Vidhan Bhavan is at **Bhararisain**, near Gairsain; the demand for Gairsain as the capital dates back to the statehood movement.

2.2 Devbhoomi Parivar Bill, 2026 — A Family ID for Every Household

WHY IN NEWS Passed on 10 March, the Bill creates an integrated, family-level database so that welfare benefits can reach eligible families without repeated paperwork.

Instrument	Unique Devbhoomi Parivar ID for each family
Head of family	The eldest woman aged 18 or above ; if there is none, the eldest man until a woman member turns 18
Eligibility	Families living in Uttarakhand continuously for 15 years or more (state employees posted outside included; temporary residents for study/work excluded)
Governing body	Devbhoomi Parivar Authority chaired by the Chief Minister, with the Chief Secretary as Vice-Chair; ADM-rank officers handle district-level verification
Data protection	Framed in line with the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023
Penalties	Unauthorised access, tampering or deletion of data: up to 10 years' imprisonment and a minimum fine of ₹50 lakh; identity fraud: 3 years and ₹50,000

Similar family-ID systems exist in other states, e.g. **Parivar Pehchan Patra** in Haryana and the Family ID (Ek Parivar Ek Pehchan) in Uttar Pradesh.

2.3 Uttarakhand Public Gambling Prevention Bill, 2026

WHY IN NEWS The new law replaces the colonial-era Public Gambling Act, 1867, whose penalties were negligible, with graded and much stiffer punishments.

Offence	Punishment
Gambling in a public place (street, lane)	Up to 3 months' imprisonment, or fine up to ₹5,000, or both
Gambling in a private house	Up to 2 years' imprisonment or fine up to ₹10,000
Running a gambling house (den)	Up to 5 years' imprisonment, fine up to ₹1 lakh, or both
Organised betting / syndicates	3 to 5 years' imprisonment and fine up to ₹10 lakh

CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION

- 'Betting and gambling' is **Entry 34 of the State List** (Seventh Schedule), so states make their own gambling laws.
- The Public Gambling Act, 1867 was a central law of British India that continued in many states, including Uttarakhand, until replaced by state laws.

2.4 Uniform Civil Code (Amendment) Bill, 2026

WHY IN NEWS The Bill replaced the UCC (Amendment) Ordinance promulgated on 26 January 2026, a year after the UCC came into force on 27 January 2025.

- About **15 amendments** to the Uniform Civil Code, Uttarakhand, 2024; penal references aligned with the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023.
- Misrepresentation of identity made a ground for annulment of marriage; stricter penalties for force, coercion or fraud in marriage and live-in relationships.
- Registrars can issue a **termination certificate** for live-in relationships; the Registrar General can cancel irregular registrations.
- If a Sub-Registrar misses a deadline, the matter moves automatically to the higher authority; appeal provided against penalties imposed on Sub-Registrars; fines recoverable as arrears of land revenue.
- Gender-neutral wording — 'spouse' used in place of 'widow'.

UCC — KEY FACTS

- **Article 44** (Directive Principles) asks the State to endeavour to secure a Uniform Civil Code for citizens.
- Uttarakhand's UCC Bill was passed on **7 February 2024**; the Act came into force on **27 January 2025** — the first state after Independence to implement a UCC (Goa's civil code dates from the Portuguese era).
- In **March 2026 Gujarat** passed the Gujarat Uniform Civil Code, 2026, becoming the second state after Uttarakhand to pass a UCC law.

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03

POLITY & SOCIAL SECTOR

Governance, Rankings & Initiatives



3.1 Cabinet Expansion — Council of Ministers at Full Strength

WHY IN NEWS On 20 March 2026 Governor Lt Gen Gurmit Singh (Retd) administered the oath of office and secrecy to five new ministers at Lok Bhavan, Dehradun, taking the Council of Ministers (including the CM) to its maximum permissible size of 12. Portfolios were allocated on 22 March.

Minister	Constituency	Main portfolios (22 Mar)
Madan Kaushik	Haridwar	Panchayati Raj, Disaster Management, AYUSH, Census
Khajan Das	Rajpur Road (Dehradun)	Social Welfare, Minority Welfare, Student Welfare
Bharat Singh Chaudhary	Rudraprayag	Rural Development, MSME
Pradeep Batra	Roorkee	Transport, IT, Science & Technology, Biotechnology
Ram Singh Kaira	Bhimtal	Urban Development, Environment, Watershed Management

- Madan Kaushik and Khajan Das had been ministers earlier; the other three became ministers for the first time.
- Existing ministers: **Subodh Uniyal** got Health and Medical Education in addition to Forests and Parliamentary Affairs; **Dhan Singh Rawat** got Technical Education in addition to School Education and Cooperation.
- The Chief Minister kept Home, Finance and Revenue among other departments.

WHY 12? — ARTICLE 164(1A)

- Inserted by the **91st Constitutional Amendment Act, 2003**: the total number of ministers, including the Chief Minister, in a state shall not exceed **15% of the total strength of the Legislative Assembly**, but shall **not be less than 12**.
- Uttarakhand has a 70-member Assembly; 15% of 70 is 10.5, so the floor of 12 applies — the same position as in Goa, Sikkim, Mizoram and other small states.
- Ministers are appointed by the Governor on the advice of the Chief Minister (Article 164(1)) and take oath under the Third Schedule.

3.2 Four Years of the Second Dhama Government

WHY IN NEWS Pushkar Singh Dhama took the oath of office for his second term on 23 March 2022. The anniversary was marked with a state function at Parade Ground, Dehradun, three days of district-level camps (23–25 March) and visits by Union ministers.

- 7 March, Haridwar:** Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation **Amit Shah** inaugurated and laid the foundation stones of projects worth **more than ₹1,132 crore**.
- 23 March, Dehradun:** The CM launched **74 schemes worth ₹401.86 crore** (sewerage, flood protection, water supply).
- 21 March, Haldwani:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh addressed a public meeting on the government's record.

Major decisions of the last four years cited by the government

Decision	Key fact
Uniform Civil Code	In force from 27 January 2025 — first state to implement a UCC
Anti-copying law	Competitive examinations law (ordinance of 10 Feb 2023): up to life imprisonment and fine up to ₹10 crore for paper leaks
Land law, 2025	Outsiders barred from buying agricultural/horticultural land in 11 of 13 districts (except Haridwar and Udham Singh Nagar)
Anti-conversion law	Freedom of Religion Act made stricter (2022, amended again in 2025)
Women and state agitators	30% horizontal reservation for women and 10% for state-movement agitators in government jobs
Ex-gratia to soldiers	For families of martyrs raised from ₹10 lakh to ₹50 lakh
'House of Himalayas'	Umbrella brand for local products of the state

3.3 Uttarakhand First in Implementing ICJS 2.0 and the New Criminal Laws

WHY IN NEWS According to the CCTNS/ICJS Progress Dashboard of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), Uttarakhand ranked first in the country in implementing the Inter-operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS) 2.0 (dashboard as of January 2026; reported on 7 March).

Rank	State	Score
1	Uttarakhand	93.46
2	Haryana	93.41
3	Assam	93.16
4	Sikkim	91.82
5	Madhya Pradesh	90.55

- Measures implementation of the **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita**, **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita** and **Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam** (in force since 1 July 2024).
- Over **23,000 police personnel** trained; **e-Sakshya** app for digital evidence, **Nyaya Shruti** for virtual hearings, and mobile forensic vans in use.
- 'One Data, One Entry' — data entered once is shared among police (CCTNS), e-Courts, e-Prisons, e-Prosecution and e-Forensics.

KNOW THE TERMS

- CCTNS** — Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems, a nationwide network linking police stations (MHA, 2009).
- ICJS** — Inter-operable Criminal Justice System linking the five pillars of criminal justice; ICJS 2.0 is being implemented up to 2026.

3.4 NITI Aayog Fiscal Health Index 2026 — Uttarakhand 2nd among Himalayan States

WHY IN NEWS NITI Aayog released the second edition of the Fiscal Health Index (FHI) in March 2026, based on data for 2023-24. For the first time, 10 North-Eastern and Himalayan States were ranked as a separate group.

Coverage	28 states — 18 major (general category) states and 10 North-Eastern & Himalayan States
Five pillars	Quality of expenditure, revenue mobilisation, fiscal prudence, debt index, debt sustainability
Categories	Achiever, Front-runner, Performer, Aspirational
Top major states	Odisha (1st, 73.1), Goa (2nd), Jharkhand (3rd)
NE & Himalayan group	Arunachal Pradesh 1st; Uttarakhand 2nd — 'Achiever', helped by relatively high own-revenue mobilisation

3.5 Other Governance Initiatives

WHY IN NEWS Health, education and women-related initiatives during the month.

- **100-day intensive TB eradication campaign (24 Mar):** Launched by the Governor at Lok Bhavan on World TB Day with a mobile outreach van; Dehradun, Udham Singh Nagar and Pithoragarh were honoured as the best-performing districts and Ni-kshay Mitras recognised.
- **'Pragyanam' AI chatbot (25 Mar):** Developed by **Sri Dev Suman Uttarakhand University** (Badshahithaul, Tehri) to answer students' academic and administrative queries; launched by the Governor.
- **International Women's Day (8 Mar):** The CM honoured 38 women from all 13 districts for work in education, social service, entrepreneurship, environment, agriculture, water conservation and culture.

04

ECONOMY

Economy, Budget & Infrastructure



4.1 State Budget 2026-27 — ₹1,11,703 Crore

WHY IN NEWS Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami, who also holds Finance, presented the budget at Bhararisain on 9 March 2026. It is about 10% larger than the 2025-26 budget and is built on the 'SANTULAN' principles and the 'GYAN' priority model.

Item (2026-27, BE)	₹ crore
Total expenditure (budget size)	1,11,703.21
Revenue expenditure	64,989.44
Capital account expenditure	46,713.77
Revenue receipts	67,525.77
Capital receipts	42,617.35
Revenue surplus	2,536.33
Fiscal deficit	12,579.70 (about 2.9% of GSDP)
Gender budget	19,692.02 (2025-26: 16,961.32)
GSDP projected for 2026-27	4,27,716 (12% growth)

Selected allocations

Head / scheme	Allocation
Education, sports, youth welfare & culture	₹12,660.60 crore
Medical & family welfare	₹4,546.47 crore
Public Works (roads and bridges)	₹2,502 crore
PM Gram Sadak Yojana	₹1,050 crore
Kumbh Mela 2027, Haridwar	About ₹1,000 crore
Annapurta Yojana (food security)	₹1,300 crore
Nanda Gaura Yojana	₹220 crore
PM Matsya Sampada Yojana	₹160.13 crore
Mission Apple / Trout promotion	₹42 crore / ₹39.90 crore
Free bus travel	₹42 crore
Nanda Devi Raj Jat Yatra	₹25 crore
Spiritual Economic Zones (one each in Garhwal and Kumaon)	₹10 crore
Mukhyamantri Yuva Bhavishya Nirman Yojana	₹10 crore

THE BUDGET'S ACRONYMS

- **GYAN** — Gareeb (poor), Yuva (youth), Annadata (farmers) and Nari (women): the four priority groups.
- **SANTULAN** — eight guiding principles: inclusive development, self-reliance, new thinking, rapid growth, advanced villages and cities, public participation, economic strength and fair governance.
- New initiatives announced include Phase II of the **Manaskhand Mandir Mala Mission** (14 temples), a **Kedarkhand Mala Mission** for pilgrimage sites in Garhwal and a Chief Minister Hub-and-SPOC model for skill development.

4.2 Uttarakhand Economic Survey 2025-26

WHY IN NEWS Released on 5 March 2026 by the Planning Department (Principal Secretary R. Meenakshi Sundaram) and tabled in the Assembly during the budget session.

Indicator	Figure
GSDP growth rate, 2025-26	7.23% (2024-25: 6.44%)
GSDP at current prices, 2025-26	About ₹3.81 lakh crore (2022: ₹2.54 lakh crore)
Per capita income, 2025-26	₹2,73,921 (national average ₹2,19,575)
Multidimensional poverty	Fell from 9.70% to 6.92%
Largest sector share	Manufacturing — 26.02% of GSDP
Recognised start-ups	1,750 (2022: 702)
Large industries	128 (2022: 107)
Solar power capacity	1,027 MW (2022: 439 MW)
Health	IMR 22 → 20; MMR 103 → 91; life expectancy about 73 years

Per capita income: Uttarakhand vs India (₹)

Year	Uttarakhand	India
2011-12	1,00,314	63,462
2021-22	1,94,670	1,50,906
2023-24 (RE)	2,32,457	1,88,892
2024-25	2,50,736	2,05,324
2025-26	2,73,921	2,19,575

4.3 Rishikesh Bypass on NH-7 — ₹1,105.79 Crore Sanctioned

WHY IN NEWS On 31 March 2026 the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways approved a four-lane bypass for Rishikesh to relieve congestion on the Char Dham route.

Highway	National Highway-7
Length	12.67 km, four-lane
Alignment	Teenpani flyover (km 529.750) to Kharasrote bridge (km 542.420), via Bhattowala and Dhalwala
Cost	₹1,105.79 crore (revised from ₹1,151.18 crore)
Mode / timeline	EPC mode; 3 years

4.4 Dehradun–Pithoragarh Air Service

WHY IN NEWS On 26 March 2026 (Ram Navami) the Chief Minister flagged off the Alliance Air flight between Dehradun and Pithoragarh under the UDAN regional connectivity scheme.

Route	Jolly Grant Airport (Dehradun) – Naini Saini Airport (Pithoragarh)
Operator / aircraft	Alliance Air, 42-seater aircraft; flight time about one hour
Scheme	UDAN — Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik (Regional Connectivity Scheme, 2016)
Related	About ₹450 crore planned for expansion of Naini Saini Airport; MoU with the Airports Authority of India proposed

4.5 Preparations for Kumbh 2027, Haridwar

WHY IN NEWS With the Kumbh due in Haridwar in 2027, the state sanctioned works and sought central support during the month.

- **22 Mar:** ₹50.27 crore sanctioned for a **Command and Control Centre-2** building in Haridwar (₹20.11 crore released), plus a 44.80 m double-lane cable-net arch bridge over the Sukhi river (₹13.21 crore). Permanent works are to be completed by October 2026.
- **28 Mar:** The CM met Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw and sought **₹143.96 crore from MeitY for 'Digital Kumbh 2027'**.

Rail proposal raised by the state (28 Mar)	Status sought
RRTS (Namo Bharat) extension to Haridwar and Rishikesh	Extension
Rishikesh-Karnaprayag rail line (125 km)	Completion by 2026
Tanakpur-Bageshwar rail line	Declaration as a national project
Haridwar-Dehradun line	Doubling
Mohand-Dehradun-Saharanpur line	Approval

05

GEOGRAPHY & ENVIRONMENT

Disaster Management & Environment



5.1 Working Group to Monitor High-Risk Glacial Lakes

WHY IN NEWS On 26 March 2026 the state constituted a working group for monitoring sensitive glacial lakes and reducing the risk of glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs); the CM approved ₹9 crore for the state component of the National GLOF Risk Mitigation Project (NGRMP).

- The **Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG), Dehradun** is the nodal agency, working with remote-sensing agencies, IMD, the Central Water Commission and the National Institute of Hydrology.
- Uttarakhand has about **13 glacial lakes identified as sensitive**, of which **5 are in the highest-risk category; Vasudhara Tal** (Chamoli) and high-risk lakes in Pithoragarh are being studied first.
- Plan: sensors, early-warning sirens and data-sharing between institutions before the monsoon.

BACKGROUND

- **GLOF** — sudden release of water from a lake dammed by a glacier or moraine. The Kedarnath disaster (June 2013, Chorabari Tal) and the Chamoli/Rishiganga flood (February 2021) are the state's best-known glacier-linked disasters.
- The **NGRMP** was approved by the Centre in 2025 for four states — Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh — under the NDMA.

5.2 National Workshop on Elephant–Train Collisions at WII, Dehradun

WHY IN NEWS The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change held a two-day workshop on 'Policy Implementation for Minimising Elephant Mortalities on Railway Tracks' at the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun on 10–11 March 2026.

Indicator	Figure
India's share of the world's Asian elephants	Over 60%
Railway stretches assessed	127 (3,452.4 km)
Priority stretches identified	77 (1,965.2 km) in 14 states
Mitigation structures recommended	705
— ramps and level crossings	503
— bridge modifications	72
— new underpasses / overpasses	65 / 22

- Technologies discussed: a **Distributed Acoustic System (DAS)**-based intrusion detection system piloted over 64 km in Assam, and an AI-based early-warning system with thermal cameras in Tamil Nadu.
- In Uttarakhand the Haridwar–Dehradun railway line passes through the **Rajaji Tiger Reserve**, a key elephant habitat.

06

CULTURE & TOURISM

Tourism, Pilgrimage, Art & Culture



6.1 Char Dham Yatra 2026 — Opening Dates and Registrations

WHY IN NEWS Online registration for the 2026 yatra opened on 6 March; within ten days more than six lakh pilgrims had registered. The Badrinath-Kedarnath Temple Committee (BKTC), chaired by Hemant Dwivedi, announced its arrangements in March.

Shrine	Opening date (2026)	Registrations (6–16 Mar)
Yamunotri	19 April (Akshaya Tritiya)	1,13,256
Gangotri	19 April (Akshaya Tritiya)	1,15,763
Kedarnath	22 April	2,06,622
Badrinath	23 April	1,82,212
Total	—	6,17,853

- BKTC approved a budget of over **₹121 crore** for 2026-27 (Badrinath over ₹57 crore; Kedarnath over ₹63 crore).
- Mobile phones, photography, videography and reels restricted within a set distance of the temples.

HOW OPENING DATES ARE FIXED

- Badrinath's date is announced on **Basant Panchami** at the Narendranagar royal palace (Tehri); Kedarnath's on **Mahashivratri** at the Omkareshwar temple, Ukhimath.
- Gangotri and Yamunotri open on **Akshaya Tritiya**; in winter the deities are worshipped at Mukhba (Gangotri) and Kharsali (Yamunotri).

6.2 'e-Swasthya Dham' — Real-Time Health Monitoring of Pilgrims

WHY IN NEWS On 17 March the state announced that the health of Char Dham pilgrims will be monitored in real time through the e-Swasthya Dham portal, so that medical help reaches them quickly on the high-altitude routes.

Arrangement	Number
Ambulances on yatra routes (incl. 108 service, ALS and cardiac)	177
Boat ambulance (Tehri) / helicopter ambulance (AIIMS Rishikesh)	1 / 1
Medical relief posts	25
Health screening points	33
Specialists / medical officers / paramedics (15-day rotation)	16 / 46 / 85
Health volunteers	100

6.3 Phool Dei and Kumaoni Holi

WHY IN NEWS Two spring festivals of the state were celebrated during the month — Holi (3–4 March) and Phool Dei (14–15 March), which the Governor marked with children at Lok Bhavan.

PHOOL DEI

- A children's festival of spring celebrated on **Chaitra Sankranti**, the first day of the month of Chaitra.
- Children place flowers such as **phyonli** and **buransh** (rhododendron) on the thresholds of houses, singing 'Phool Dei, Chhamma Dei', and receive rice, jaggery and gifts.

KUMAONI HOLI

- **Baithki Holi** — seated singing of classical raga-based Holi songs, beginning from Paush; **Khadi Holi** — standing, circular singing and dancing to dhol and hurka; **Mahila Holi** — gatherings of women.
- Almora and Champawat are known for the tradition; the CM described the state's Holi as having a unique cultural identity.

6.4 International Yoga Festival, Rishikesh and AYUSH

WHY IN NEWS The International Yoga Festival was held at Rishikesh, the 'Yoga Capital of the World', from 9 to 15 March 2026. Addressing it, the CM outlined the state's AYUSH network.

- More than **300 AYUSH-based Ayushman Arogya Kendras** are working in the state; over 70 AYUSH specialists consult through the **e-Sanjeevani** portal.
- AYUSH hospitals of 50 and 10 beds planned in every district.
- ₹10 crore provided for one **Spiritual Economic Zone** each in Garhwal and Kumaon.
- Uttarakhand became the first state to adopt a dedicated **Yoga Policy** (June 2025).

6.5 State Tribal Festival 2026

WHY IN NEWS The Chief Minister took part in the State Tribal Festival 2026 in Dehradun on 26 March, which showcased the crafts, food and folk arts of the state's tribal communities.

SCHEDULED TRIBES OF UTTARAKHAND

- Five communities are notified as Scheduled Tribes (1967): **Tharu, Jaunsari, Buksa, Bhotia and Raji**.
- **Buksa and Raji** are Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs); the Raji live mainly in Pithoragarh and Champawat.
- Tharu (largest ST) and Buksa live mainly in Udham Singh Nagar and the terai; Jaunsari in the Jaunsar-Bawar area (Chakrata, Dehradun); Bhotia in the high valleys of Chamoli, Uttarkashi and Pithoragarh.
- STs form about **2.9%** of the state's population (Census 2011).

6.6 Uttarakhand Sahitya Gaurav Samman 2025

WHY IN NEWS At a ceremony organised by the Uttarakhand Bhasha Sansthan at the Chief Minister's residence, Dehradun on 30 March 2026, the CM presented the state's literary awards.

Award	Awardee(s)
Uttarakhand Sahitya Bhushan Samman (highest)	Dr Jiten Thakur
Lifetime excellence in literary creation	Buddhinath Mishra, Shyam Singh Kutaula, Pritam Singh, Kesar Singh Rai, Atae Sabir Afzal Manglori
Sahitya Nari Vandan Samman	Prof. Diva Bhatt
Excellence in children's literature	Prof. Dinesh Chamola
Uttarakhand Original Writing Award	Bhupendra Bisht, Sudha Jugran, Sheeshpal Gusain
Excellence in Kumaoni and Garhwali literature	Tara Pathak, Hemant Singh Bisht, Gajendra Nautiyal

07

MISCELLANEOUS

Defence, Persons & Important Days



7.1 Exercise Dharma Guardian 2026 at Chaubatia

WHY IN NEWS The 7th edition of the India–Japan joint military exercise Dharma Guardian was held at Chaubatia (Ranikhet, Almora) from 24 February to 9 March 2026.

Countries	India (Indian Army) and Japan (Japan Ground Self-Defense Force)
Edition / dates	7th; 24 February – 9 March 2026
Venue	Chaubatia, Ranikhet (Almora district)
Focus	Joint urban warfare and counter-terrorism operations under a UN mandate; interoperability

Also in the month, the Indian Air Force and the Army carried out combat free-fall and static-line **para-drops over Tehri Lake** (8 March) to demonstrate inter-service synergy.

7.2 Persons in News

WHY IN NEWS People from or linked with Uttarakhand who were in the news in March 2026.

Person	Why in news
Lt Gen Gurmit Singh (Retd)	Governor; administered the oath to five new ministers (20 Mar)
Madan Kaushik, Khajan Das, Bharat Singh Chaudhary, Pradeep Batra, Ram Singh Kaira	Sworn in as cabinet ministers (20 Mar)
Dr Jiten Thakur	Uttarakhand Sahitya Bhushan Samman (30 Mar)
Hemant Dwivedi	Chairman, Badrinath-Kedarnath Temple Committee; announced Char Dham 2026 arrangements
R. Meenakshi Sundaram	Principal Secretary; released the Economic Survey 2025-26 (5 Mar)
Gajendra Singh Budiyaal	Given additional charge of UPCL in a reshuffle of energy-sector corporations (18 Mar)

7.3 Important Days Observed in March 2026

WHY IN NEWS Days observed in the state with events and messages.

Date	Day	Note
3–4 Mar	Holi	Kumaoni Baithki and Khadi Holi traditions
8 Mar	International Women's Day	38 women honoured by the CM
14–15 Mar	Phool Dei	Chaitra Sankranti; children's flower festival
21 Mar	International Day of Forests	—
22 Mar	World Water Day	—
23 Mar	Shaheed Diwas	Also four years of the second Dhimi government
24 Mar	World TB Day	100-day intensive TB campaign launched
26 Mar	Ram Navami	Dehradun–Pithoragarh flight launched
28 Mar	Earth Hour	CM's message on conserving energy

08

RAPID REVISION

Quick Revision: One-Liners



#	Fact
1	Budget 2026-27 of ₹1,11,703 crore was presented at Bhararisain (Gairsain) on 9 March 2026.
2	For the first time, the budget was presented on the same day as the Governor's address.
3	Budget 2026-27 shows a revenue surplus of ₹2,536.33 crore and a fiscal deficit of ₹12,579.70 crore.
4	The budget's priority model is GYAN — Gareeb, Yuva, Annadata, Nari.
5	Economic Survey 2025-26: growth 7.23%; per capita income ₹2,73,921 against the national ₹2,19,575.
6	Manufacturing has the largest share (26.02%) in Uttarakhand's GSDP.
7	The budget session (9–13 March) lasted 41 hours 10 minutes and passed 12 Bills.
8	Under the Devbhoomi Parivar Bill, the eldest woman (18+) is the head of the family ID.
9	A Devbhoomi Parivar ID requires 15 years' continuous residence in the state.
10	The Public Gambling Prevention Bill, 2026 replaces the Public Gambling Act, 1867.
11	Organised betting now attracts 3–5 years' imprisonment and a fine up to ₹10 lakh.
12	The UCC (Amendment) Bill, 2026 replaced the ordinance of 26 January 2026.
13	Gujarat became the second state, after Uttarakhand, to pass a UCC law (March 2026).
14	Tenure of the Uttarakhand Minority Commission's members was cut from 5 to 3 years.
15	A Nepali Academy has been added under the Uttarakhand Bhasha Sansthan Act, 2018.
16	Five ministers took the oath on 20 March, taking the Council of Ministers to 12 (Article 164(1A)).
17	Uttarakhand ranked first on NCRB's ICJS 2.0 dashboard with a score of 93.46; Haryana was second.
18	In NITI Aayog's Fiscal Health Index 2026, Uttarakhand was 2nd among NE & Himalayan States; Arunachal Pradesh was 1st.
19	Veer Udyami Yojana reserves 10% of the Mukhyamantri Swarozgar Yojana quota for ex-servicemen and ex-Agniveers.
20	Wheat will be procured at the MSP of ₹2,585 per quintal in Rabi 2026-27; target 2.2 lakh tonnes.
21	Amit Shah launched projects worth over ₹1,132 crore at Haridwar on 7 March.
22	MoRTH sanctioned ₹1,105.79 crore for the 12.67 km four-lane Rishikesh bypass on NH-7.
23	Alliance Air's Dehradun–Pithoragarh (Naini Saini) flight began on 26 March under UDAN.
24	₹50.27 crore was sanctioned for the Kumbh Command and Control Centre-2 at Haridwar.
25	The state sought ₹143.96 crore from MeitY for 'Digital Kumbh 2027'.
26	Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology is the nodal agency for monitoring the state's high-risk glacial lakes.
27	The MoEFCC workshop on elephant–train collisions (WII, 10–11 March) prioritised 77 stretches of 1,965.2 km.
28	Char Dham 2026: Gangotri–Yamunotri open 19 April, Kedarnath 22 April, Badrinath 23 April.
29	More than 6.17 lakh pilgrims registered for the Char Dham Yatra between 6 and 16 March.
30	'e-Swasthya Dham' portal monitors pilgrims' health in real time; 177 ambulances are deployed on the routes.
31	Dr Jiten Thakur received the Uttarakhand Sahitya Bhushan Samman on 30 March.
32	The 7th India–Japan exercise Dharma Guardian was held at Chaubatia (Almora), 24 Feb–9 Mar 2026.

Compiled from official releases (DIPR Uttarakhand, PIB) and reports in leading newspapers, March 2026.



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