

**December 2024**

**Uttarakhand Disaster & Accident Analysis Initiative (UDAAI)  
Monthly Reports**

**Social Development for Communities (SDC) Foundation  
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**About UDAAI Monthly Reports**

Uttarakhand Disaster & Accident Analysis Initiative (UDAAI) is a monthly initiative by Dehradun-based environmental action and advocacy group, Social Development for Communities (SDC) Foundation. The goal of the UDAAI reports is to document disasters and accidents in Uttarakhand, leading to human and ecological casualties. UDAAI is based on media reports in respectable publications in English and Hindi newspapers, as well as news portals. UDAAI neither attempts nor claims to document all disasters and all accidents in Uttarakhand; its focus instead is to document major casualties and non-casualty events on a regular basis.

We strongly believe that with the perils of inclement climate and unabated disasters, the ecologically fragile and earthquake-prone state of Uttarakhand needs to take many more steps to increase its disaster preparedness. We therefore see UDAAI as a document that highlights attention towards the urgent need of a holistic disaster management and accident minimization policy framework in Uttarakhand.

It is our earnest hope that UDAAI will spur political leadership, policy makers, bureaucracy, research and academic institutions, businesses, civil society organisations, media and the citizenry at large to initiate inclusive, regular and action-oriented conversations on the subjects of resilience, mitigation and adaptation in Uttarakhand. With mainstreaming and a greater focus on the issue, there is likely to be an improvement in the process of planning of climate actions and disaster management in Uttarakhand.

**1. December 3, 2024 : Gangotri Glacier Shrinking: Distance Between Gangotri Dham and Gomukh Increases by 2 Km, Raising Environmental Concerns**

The Gangotri glacier, the source of the Bhagirathi (Ganga) River, has been undergoing rapid changes over the past few decades. The glacier's mouth at Gomukh is visibly changing, and though there are differing opinions on the causes and speed of these changes, it is clear that the area and thickness of the Gangotri glacier are decreasing.

A new finding has emerged regarding the distance between Gangotri Dham and Gomukh. The authentic distance recorded for the Gomukh trek in 1990 was 18 km, but recent GPS mapping has shown the distance to be 20 km. Although this new distance has not yet been officially verified, it has raised concerns among environmental experts and scientists.

Recently, a team from the Gangotri National Park mapped the trek from Gangotri to Gomukh, recording a 2 km longer distance than previously thought. Pradeep Bisht, the park's range officer, stated that this data is not official and needs further verification. He also mentioned that changes in other trekking routes like Nandanvan, Tapovan, and Kalindi have been observed in recent years.

Dr. PS Negi, a senior scientist, pointed out that the methods used by the Forest Department to measure the distance between Gangotri and Gomukh should be specified by them.

Dr. DP Dobhal, a former senior scientist at the Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology, explained that the Gangotri glacier has been melting for years. Due to insufficient snow accumulation, the glacier has been unable to receive the necessary "nourishment." As the lower layers of the glacier become hollow, large chunks of ice break off, contributing to the visible changes.

Dr. Dobhal added that while the glacier's melting rate is not as rapid as some might think, it is clear that these changes are part of a broader environmental shift that requires further study and attention.

# गंगोत्री धाम से गोमुख के बीच की दूरी दो किमी बढ़ी !

## वन विभाग की हालिया जीपीएस मैपिंग में 20 किमी पाई गई गंगोत्री धाम से गोमुख के बीच की दूरी

लेखक: लोहितकान्त • जगदगण

**उत्तरकाशी:** भानोरी (गंगा) नदी के कुछ दूराक में तेजी से बदलावा आया है। ग्लेशियर के मुहाने गोमुख में स्पष्ट रूप से परिवर्तन दिखाई दे रहा है। हालांकि, इन बदलावों के कारण और उनकी गति को लेकर अलग-अलग मत हैं, लेकिन यह स्पष्ट है कि गंगोत्री ग्लेशियर का क्षेत्र और मोटाई घट रही है। अब एक नई बात गंगोत्री धाम से गोमुख के बीच की दूरी को लेकर भी सामने आई है। गोमुख ट्रेक को वर्ष 1990 में दर्ज की गई प्रामाणिक दूरी 18 किमी थी, जो हाल ही की जीपीएस मैपिंग में 20 किमी पाई गई है। हालांकि, अभी इस नई दूरी को प्रमाणित नहीं किया गया है, लेकिन इस तथ्य ने पर्यावरण विशेषज्ञ और विज्ञानियों के माथे पर बल जरूर डाल दिए हैं।

दरअसल, गंगोत्री नेशनल पार्क की एक टीम कुछ समय पहले गंगोत्री से ट्रेक की मैपिंग करते हुए गोमुख तक गई थी। इस टीम ने जीपीएस मैपिंग में गंगोत्री से गोमुख की दूरी पूर्व की अपेक्षा दो किमी अधिक दर्ज की। पार्क के रेंज अधिकारी प्रदीप बिष्ट बताते हैं कि यह आंकड़ा आधिकारिक नहीं है, इसलिए फिलहाल दावे के साथ कुछ नहीं कहा जा सकता। हां! अगर जीपीएस में ट्रेक की सटीक दूरी तय करने के लिए विभाग नियमानुसार

**वन विभाग के अनुसार अभी प्रमाणित नहीं है यह दूरी, फिर भी बढ़ी पर्यावरण विज्ञानियों की चिंता**

**गोमुख ट्रेक की वर्ष 1990 में दर्ज की गई प्रामाणिक दूरी 18 किलोमीटर थी अब विभाग दोबारा लगाएगा पता**

**वर्ष 2017 में नील ताल का प्रभाव**  
डा. नेगी बताते हैं कि वर्ष 2017 में मेरू पर्वत के पास नील ताल टूटने से गोमुख क्षेत्र में भारी भूस्खलन हुआ था। इसके चलते करीब डेढ़ किमी क्षेत्र में मलबा फैल गया था, जिसने गोमुख के भीतिक

**कम बर्फवारी का दिख रहा असर**  
डा. नेगी के अनुसार जो पश्चिमी विक्षोभ अक्टूबर में सक्रिय होना चाहिए था, वह अभी तक कमजोर पड़ा हुआ है। जबकि, पश्चिमी विक्षोभ के सक्रिय होने से निचले इलाकों में वर्षा और ऊंचाई वाले क्षेत्र में अच्छी बर्फवारी होती है। इस बार बर्फवारी न होने के कारण ही हिमालय की चोटियां बर्फबिहीन स्थिति में काली दिख रही हैं। कम बर्फवारी का असर तो ग्लेशियर पर पड़ेगा ही।

**ग्लेशियर को नहीं मिल रही खुराक**  
वाडिया हिमालय भूविज्ञान संस्थान के पूर्व वरिष्ठ विज्ञानी डा. डीपी डोभाल कहते हैं कि गंगोत्री ग्लेशियर आज ही नहीं, बल्कि वर्षों से पिघल रहा है। बस! ग्लेशियर को अच्छी बर्फ के रूप में खुराक मिलनी चाहिए थी, वह नहीं मिल रही। जब ग्लेशियर की निचली सतह खोखली होती है तो उसके बड़े-बड़े हिस्से बोल्टर की तरह टूट जाते हैं।

इनके पिघलने की रफ्तार काफी कम होती है, लेकिन कभी-कभी ग्लेशियर के टुकड़े बहकर गंगोत्री धाम तक पहुंच जाते हैं। इसी कारण बदलाव भी नजर आता है। यह कहना गलत है कि गंगोत्री ग्लेशियर तेजी से पिघल रहा है। सही बात यह है कि जिस तरह से इसका विस्तृत अध्ययन होना चाहिए था, वह अभी तक नहीं हुआ है।

को बात तो गंगोत्री से गोमुख बीच हर वर्ष ट्रेक क्षतिग्रस्त हो जाता है और नया ट्रेक व पुलिया निर्माण के कारण दूरी में अंतर आ जना कोई बड़ी बात नहीं है। हां! यह जरूर है कि गंगोत्री ग्लेशियर पिछले 40 वर्षों में औसतन 12-13 मीटर प्रतिवर्ष पीछे खिसक रहा है। इसका मतलब यह हुआ कि गंगोत्री ग्लेशियर पिघलकर लगभग आधा किमी पीछे खिसक चुका है। पहले ग्लेशियर जहां 60 से 70 मीटर ऊंचा होता था, अब वह केवल 40 से 50 मीटर ऊंचा नजर आता है।

गंगोत्री ग्लेशियर के गोमुख का सात साल पहले का दृश्य • जगदगण आर्काइव



DAINIK JAGRAN  
DECEMBER 3, 2024

## **2. December 10, 2024: “Exceedingly grave” - HC on reports of mining causing cracks in Bageshwar houses**

Uttarakhand High Court has taken suo motu cog-nisance of news reports regarding cracks that have appeared at many places in several villages of Kanda tehsil in Bageshwar district due to soapstone mining.

A bench led by acting Chief Justice Manoj Kumar Tiwari and Justice Pankaj Purohit expressed serious concern over the matter, calling it "exceedingly grave." The court appointed two amici curiae to assess the grievances of affected villagers and directed them to submit a comprehensive report.

Additionally, the court made the divisional forest officer (DFO) of Bageshwar, the state-level Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA), and the district mining officer parties to the case, directing them to file their responses.

The matter came to light when TOI reported in Sept that Bageshwar district has 160 operational mines, including 30 new soapstone mines that were approved this year.

Local residents and activists alleged that many of these sites violate mining regulations, such as use of heavy machinery, including up to six excavators per site, without formal authorisation from the mining department or local administration. "These machines operate continuously. They not only disturb the natural habitat of animals but also severely affect residents. The constant vibrations make it impossible to sleep at night," said Dayal Singh, a resident.

The report also underscored the alarming land subsidence affecting over 200 homes in Bageshwar villages, where cracks have appeared on roads, fields, and houses. Heavy monsoon rains, combined with unregulated mining, have exacerbated the problem.

Notably, Jyotirmath (previously Joshimath), another Uttarakhand town, has been facing large-scale subsidence. A ground survey by a committee of four experts from state-run Sri Dev Suman Uttarakhand University had earlier revealed "fissures up to 2ft wide and half a kilometre long", with the town sinking due to subsurface instability.

Similarly, Bageshwar, classified as "highly disaster- prone," is witnessing severe land subsidence in villages near soapstone mines. Experts have flagged Kandekanyal vil-lage as particularly vulnerable, yet intensive mining for the steatite rock which is sold for up to Rs 7,000 per tonne continues just a few km away. Locals said mining has destabilised the terrain, hollowing out entire villages and threatening their existence.

# 'Exceedingly grave': HC on reports of mining causing cracks in Bageshwar houses

Pankul Sharma  
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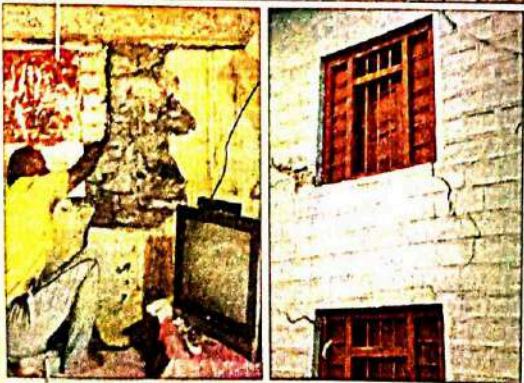
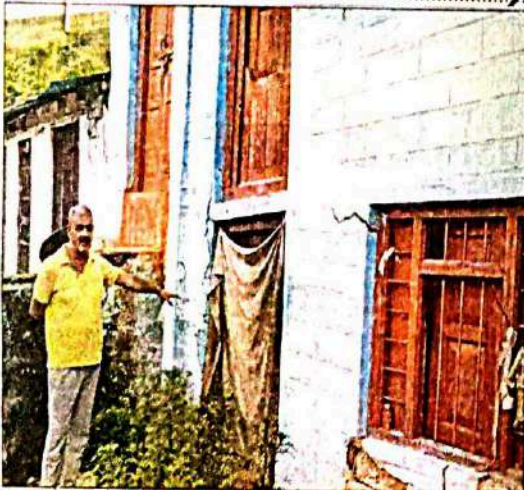
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## Sambhal mosque surveyor seeks time

Advocate commissioner Ramesh Singh Raghav, tasked by the court of the civil judge (senior division) in Sambhal to survey the Mughal-era Shahi Jama Masjid, has sought "15 days more time" to submit a report, citing "health issues" for the delay. **P 6**

them to submit a comprehensive report, scheduling the next hearing for Dec 26.

► Continued on P 3



**CAUSE OF CONCERN:** Of 160 operational mines in Bageshwar, local residents and activists alleged that many of these violate mining regulations such as using heavy machinery without formal authorisation

# HC appoints amici curiae to comprehend issue, asks for probe

► Continued from P1

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Local residents and activists alleged that many of these

problem. The Uttarakhand Disaster Management Authority (UDMA) has identified 11 villages in the district as vulnerable, with 450 homes at risk.

During the hearing, amici curiae Dushyant Mainali presented news reports by TOI to the bench, urging the court to investigate whether mining activities complied with SEIAA regulations.

Mainali said, "The high court observed that rampant and unregulated mining has created a disastrous situation in Kanda villages, where homes, temples, and fields are riddled with cracks. Spot inspections were ordered, and SEIAA's response has been sought. The situation is the result of a completely negligent attitude of the authorities in ensuring compliance with environmental obligations of mining lease operators."

Notably, Jyotirmath (previously Joshimath), another Uttarakhand town, has been facing large-scale subsidence. A ground survey by a committee of four experts from state-run Sri Dev Suman Uttarakhand University had earlier revealed "fissures up to 2ft wide and half a kilometre long", with the town sinking due to subsurface instability.

Similarly, Bageshwar, classified as "highly disaster-prone," is witnessing severe land subsidence in villages near soapstone mines. Experts have flagged Kandekanyal village as particularly vulnerable, yet intensive mining for the steatite rock — which is sold for up to Rs 7,000 per tonne — continues just a few km away. Locals said mining has destabilised the terrain, hollowing out entire villages and threatening their existence.

**“ HC observed that unregulated mining has created a disastrous situation in villages, where homes, temples, & fields are riddled with cracks**

**DUSHYANT MAINALI**  
Amicus curiae

sites violate mining regulations, such as use of heavy machinery, including up to six excavators per site, without formal authorisation from the mining department or local administration. "These machines operate continuously. They not only disturb the natural habitat of animals but also severely affect residents. The constant vibrations make it impossible to sleep at night," said Dayal Singh, a resident.

The report also underscored the alarming land subsidence affecting over 200 homes in Bageshwar villages, where cracks have appeared on roads, fields, and houses. Heavy monsoon rains, combined with unregulated mining, have exacerbated the

THINGS OF INDIA

DECEMBER 10, 2024

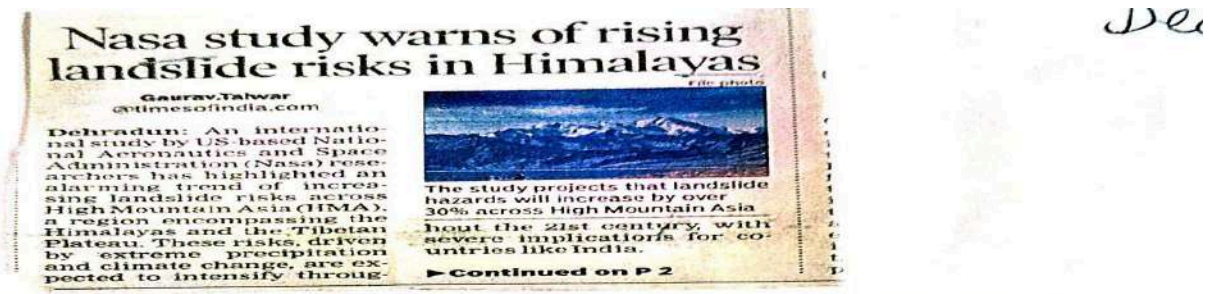
### 3. December 12, 2024 : NASA Study Warns of Rising Landslide Risks in Himalayas

An international study by US-based National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) researchers has highlighted an alarming trend of increasing landslide risks across High Mountain Asia (HMA), a region encompassing the Himalayas and the Tibetan Plateau. These risks, driven by extreme precipitation and climate change, are expected to intensify throughout the 21st century, with severe implications for countries like India.

The study, "Landslide Hazard Is Projected to Increase Across High Mountain Asia", was conducted by Nasa's Goddard Space Flight Centre and the University of Maryland and published in Earth's Future. It projects that landslide hazards will increase by over 30% across HMA by the end of the century compared to baseline levels recorded between 1990 and 2014.

In Uttarakhand and other Himalayan areas, heightened landslide activity is anticipated due to extreme precipitation events, including intense rainfall, very wet days, and extended wet periods. "Area near Tehri Dam is particularly vulnerable, with landslide susceptibility projected to rise under all scenarios," the study noted.

The findings underscore that landslide hazards in HMA will increase substantially, posing serious risks to infrastructure, ecosystems, and human lives. The study stresses the importance of proactive disaster risk reduction strategies and climate-resilient development, particularly in regions like Uttarakhand, to mitigate the escalating threats.



TIMES OF INDIA  
DECEMBER 12, 2024

#### 4. December 19, 2024 : 55 Chronic Landslide Zones Identified on Badrinath Road

The Uttarakhand Landslide Mitigation and Management Centre (ULMMC) has identified 55 chronic (persistent/severe) landslide zones on the Badrinath road. The Disaster Management and Rehabilitation Department will soon present this report to the National Highways (NH) authority for necessary remedial actions. A meeting at the government level will be scheduled soon.

Following the monsoon, ULMMC initiated a survey of the landslide-prone areas on the Badrinath route. The report includes detailed technical data on the location and area of the landslides, as well as improvements made in previously identified zones. The survey also revealed approximately 30 new landslide-prone areas that were not previously reported. The relevant departments will now review the findings to take corrective action.

## बदरीनाथ मार्ग पर 55 क्रॉनिक भूस्खलन जोन

देहरादून। उत्तराखंड लैंड स्लाइड मिटिगेशन एंड मैनेजमेंट सेंटर (यूएलएसएमएमसी) ने बदरीनाथ मार्ग 55 क्रॉनिक (लगातार होने वाले/गंभीर) भूस्खलन जोन को चिह्नित किए हैं। अब आपदा प्रबंधन एवं पुनर्वास विभाग इस रिपोर्ट को एनएच को सौंपते हुए उपचार कार्य के लिए कहेगा। इसे लेकर जल्द ही शासन स्तर पर एक बैठक भी की जाएगी।

यूएलएसएमएमसी ने बदरीनाथ मार्ग पर भूस्खलन की दृष्टि से सर्वे का काम बरसात के बाद शुरू किया था। टीम ने जो रिपोर्ट तैयार की है उसमें भूस्खलन का स्थान, उसका क्षेत्रफल समेत अन्य तकनीकी जानकारी का उल्लेख किया गया है।

किन स्थानों पर पहले भूस्खलन पहले रिपोर्ट है, कहां पर उसका

यूएलएसएमएमसी ने  
किया सर्वे, कई नए  
भूस्खलन वाले क्षेत्र भी मिले



उत्तराखंड लैंड स्लाइड मिटिगेशन एंड मैनेजमेंट सेंटर ने बदरीनाथ मार्ग पर भूस्खलन क्षेत्रों को विस्तृत सर्वे किया है। इसकी रिपोर्ट संबंधित विभाग को भेजी जा रही है, जिससे उपचार किया जा सके। जल्द ही मामले में एक बैठक भी बुलाई जाएगी। - विनोद कुमार सुमन, सचिव, आपदा प्रबंधन एवं पुनर्वास

उपचार किया गया है, इसका भी जिक्र रिपोर्ट में है। जहां पर उपचार हुआ है, लेकिन उसमें सुधार की जरूरत है इसे भी रिपोर्ट में लिखा गया है। भूस्खलन के नए क्षेत्रों को भी चिह्नित किया गया है। इनकी संख्या करीब 30 है। ब्यूरो

AMAR UDAAI

DECEMBER 19, 2024

## 5. December 22, 2024 : State saw highest forest fires in country: Report

Uttarakhand reported 21,033 forest fires from November 2023 to June 2024, the highest number to be recorded by any state in the country, showing almost a four-fold increase compared to the corresponding period in the last year (November 2022 to June 2023), the biennial India State of Forest Report (ISFR) published by the Forest Survey of India (FSI) in its 2023 report said.

The hill state witnessed 5,351 forest fires from November 2022 to June 2023 and ranked 13th in the list of states in the country. It reported 12,985 forest fires from November 2021 to June 2022.

Forest fires are generally reported from February to June and usually peak in May and June. The fires impact biodiversity, be it the microorganisms in the soil, wildlife, small insects, birds and people living in and around the forests, affecting the overall ecology of an area. Uttarakhand's forest cover is 24,303.83 sq km, which is 45.44% of the state's geographical area. More the area under forests with human habitations nearby, means more the chances of forest fire. Given the diversity of forests in the state, Uttarakhand forests are prone to forest fires. In Uttarakhand, 0.10% of total forest cover comes under the extremely fire-prone category, 12.92% under very highly fire-prone, 27.64% under highly fire-prone, 20.01% under moderately fire-prone and 39.33% under less fire-prone category.

According to the official data, 12 people died in the forest fires this year. Forest Survey of India (FSI) director general Anoop Singh said that Uttarakhand reported a significant spike in forest fires this year majorly due to dry period.

**State saw highest forest fires in country: Report**

**Amit Bathia**  
bathia@hindustantimes.com

**DEHRADUN:** Uttarakhand reported 21,033 forest fires from November 2023 to June 2024, the highest number to be recorded by any state in the country, showing almost a four-fold increase compared to the corresponding period in the last year (November 2022 to June 2023), the biennial India State of Forest Report (ISFR) published by the Forest Survey of India (FSI) in its 2023 report said.

The hill state witnessed 5,351 forest fires from November 2022 to June 2023 and ranked 13th in the list of states in the country. It reported 12,985 forest fires from November 2021 to June 2022.

The state's five districts — Nainital, Pauri Garhwal, Almora, Tehri Garhwal and Uttarkashi — also appeared in the top 20 districts in the country with maximum forest fires reported during the November 2023-June 2024 period. Nainital ranked fourth with 3,320 forest fire detections during this period. Pauri Garhwal stood fifth with 3,193 forest fires, Almora sixth with 2,810 forest fires, Tehri Garhwal was at 11th position with 2,589 forest fires, and Uttarkashi at 13 with 2,457 forest fires. Gadchiroli in Maharashtra topped the list of districts with maximum fires in the country after it reported 7,042 forest fires. It is followed by Aluri Sitharama Raju in Andhra Pradesh (6,399), Bijapur in Chhattisgarh (5,018).

On the list of states with maximum forest fire detections, Uttarakhand is followed by Odisha (20,973), which reported the highest 33,461 from November 2022 to June 2023. The other states with the maximum number of forest fires are Chhattisgarh (18,950), Andhra Pradesh (18,174), Maharashtra (16,008), Madhya Pradesh (15,878), Telangana (14,479), and Himachal Pradesh (10,136).

Forest fires are generally reported from February to June and usually peak in May and June. The fire impact biodiver-

sity, be it the microorganisms in the soil, wildlife, small insects, birds and people living in and around the forests, affecting the overall ecology of an area. Uttarakhand's forest cover is 24,303.83 sq km, which is 45.44% of the state's geographical area. More the area under forests with human habitations nearby, means more the chances of forest fires in the state. Uttarakhand forests are prone to forest fires. In Uttarakhand, 0.10% of total forest cover comes under the extremely fire-prone category, 12.92% under very highly fire-prone, 27.64% under highly fire-prone, 20.01% under moderately fire-prone and 39.33% under less fire-prone category.

HT in June this year in a report highlighted the ill-equipped first line of defence in the state. The Uttarakhand forest department has around 5,700 staff, almost all ground staff is engaged in combating fires, depending upon the need, they are not dedicated to just one task of dealing with fires. Sahayak Van Karmachari Singh of Uttarakhand, a union consisting of 1,729 foresters, said that the frontline staff was ill-equipped to deal with forest fires. According to the union, the forest staff do not have fireproof resistant suits, masks, high-quality shoes, helmet and equipment like fire beaters, blowers, which can significantly reduce the chances of the fire spreading further. They are not even trained properly in firefighting techniques, which is crucial for effective response, said Swarupchand Ramola, president of the union.

In June, six forest workers were killed while extinguishing a fire at the Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary under the Civil Soyam Forest Division in the Almora district. This was the second such incident in Almora this year. In May, four labourers employed by an individual were killed while trying to douse a forest fire in Someshwar tehsil.

According to the official data, 12 people died in the forest fires this year.

Forest Survey of India (FSI) director general Anoop Singh said that Uttarakhand reported a significant spike in forest fires this year majorly due to dry period.

"Three to four months are crucial. The major factors that contribute to the forest fires are dry period, accumulation of pine needles. That is what happened in Uttarakhand. Some forest personnel also died while dousing forest fires here. Traditionally, states like Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra report high number of fires every year, but Uttarakhand reported the maximum number of fires this year. The dry spell in Himalayan region caused that," he said.

HT reached out to additional principal chief conservator of forests and state nodal officer for forest fires Nishant Verma, but did not get any response.

**On the list of states with maximum forest fire detections, Uttarakhand is followed by Odisha (20,973).**

**HINDUSTAN TIMES**  
DECEMBER 22, 2024

## **6. December 25, 2024 : Soapstone mining risk to 10th-C Bageshwar mandir, homes, says MoEF team**

A Union ministry survey team, acting on a National Green Tribunal directive, found structural fissures in the Kalika temple and neighbouring homes in Bageshwar district. The damage, caused by subsurface erosion and slope degradation linked to mining operations, was reported to NGT on Dec 9. These findings underline the significant impact of human activity on sensitive areas, prompting urgent calls for remedial measures.

NGT had ordered the survey on August 30 taking suo motu cognisance of reports on wide-spread mining in Bageshwar. It expressed concern about the potential collapse of the centuries-old Kalika mandir, believed to date back to the 10th century. The tribunal pointed to reports of cracks in the temple premises and nearby homes, highlighting the role of unchecked mining activities in exacerbating natural vulnerabilities.

Local authorities conducted the initial survey on Sept 3, followed by a detailed assessment by two senior geologists from Geological Survey of India (GSI) on Sept 12. The GSI team focused on subsidence-affected areas, including Kanda Kaniyal village, situated at an altitude of 1,500-1,900m. The village's location in a natural depression, along with significant water seepage upslope, contributed to its vulnerability.

Kanda Kaniyal village has been known for its natural beauty. However, its location in a fragile ecosystem has left it vulnerable to natural and anthropogenic pressures. Seasonal springs and seepage have been observed here, which work as conduits for subsurface water, further destabilising the area. GSI has recommended immediate action to stabilise the slopes and address water drainage issues.



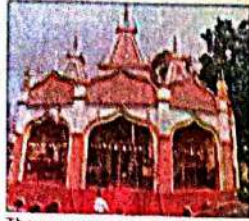
25/12/2024

# Soapstone mining risk to 10th-C Bageshwar mandir, homes, says MoEF team

Pankul Sharma & Yogesh Nagarkoti | TNN

Dehradun/Bageshwar: A Union ministry survey team, acting on a National Green Tribunal directive, found structural fissures in the Kalika temple and neighbouring homes in Bageshwar district. The damage, caused by subsurface erosion and slope degradation linked to mining operations, was reported to NGT on Dec 9. These findings underline the significant impact of human activity on sensitive areas, prompting urgent calls for remedial measures.

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The survey uncovers subsurface erosion and slope degradation linked to mining operations

lika mandir, believed to date back to the 10th century. The tribunal pointed to reports of cracks in the temple premises and nearby homes, highlighting the role of unchecked mining activities in exacerbating natural vulnerabilities. TOI extensively covered the issue, shedding light on the scale of the crisis.

► Continued on P 3

# Survey finds subsurface erosion, slope decay

► Continued from P1

In the report submitted to NGT, Dr Vipin Gupta, deputy director in the environment ministry's regional office, recommended constructing retaining or gabion walls, addressing fissures, and improving drainage systems as essential steps to mitigate the damage. These measures are aimed at controlling slope degradation and stabilising the affected areas.

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Curvilinear crack of 2-5mm wide & 2-3m long was seen on mandir floor

sion, along with significant water seepage upslope, contributed to its vulnerability.

Dr Ashish Kumar, additional director at MoEFCC's regional office, said, "Fissures in the temple and nearby houses are likely linked to slope defacing and subsurface water flow. The proximity of an open-cast soapstone mine cannot be ruled out as a contributing factor." He added that the damage stems from a mix of natural and human-induced causes, includ-

ing erosion, water seepage, and mining operations.

The GSI report noted that a curvilinear crack, measuring 2-5mm wide and 2-3m long, was observed on the mandir floor. "Cracks in the northern slope of the mandir and the house below exhibit similar patterns. This underscores the likelihood of mining contributing to the damage," the report said. The timeline of cracks in relation to mine development was identified as a critical area

for further investigation.

The GSI team identified structural and drainage deficiencies, water seepage, and natural ground instability as key factors behind the damage. While the village is surrounded by terraced fields and organic tea plantations, proximity of the open-cast soapstone mine has compounded its challenges.

Kanda Kaniyal village in has been known for its natural beauty. However, its location in a fragile ecosystem has left it vulnerable to natural and anthropogenic pressures. Seasonal springs and seepage have been observed here, which work as conduits for subsurface water, further destabilising the area.

GSI has recommended immediate action to stabilise the slopes and address water drainage issues.

TIMES OF INDIA

DELHI 25, 2024

## 7. December 26, 2024 : Bus Falls into Gorge Near Bhimtal Due to Driver's Negligence, Four Killed Including Couple and Child

A roadways bus traveling from Pithoragarh to Haldwani fell into a 300-meter deep gorge due to the driver's negligence. The accident occurred near Aamdali, Bhimtal, resulting in the death of four people, including a couple and a child from Pithoragarh district. Additionally, 27 passengers, including the driver and conductor, were injured, with six in critical condition and admitted to the ICU. Two passengers were reported to be unharmed and returned home from the accident site.

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama announced financial compensation for the victims, offering ₹10 lakh for the families of the deceased and ₹3 lakh for those seriously injured. General injured passengers will receive ₹25,000. The bus involved in the accident was a 2016 model, and its operational life had already reached its standard age limit of seven years.

The accident occurred early Wednesday morning at 5:00 AM when the bus, operated by Haldwani Depot, was on its way to Haldwani from Pithoragarh. According to passengers, the bus was speeding, and when an overtaking car appeared on a bend, the driver lost control and, instead of braking, veered the bus towards the parapet, causing it to break through and fall into the gorge.

# चालक की लापरवाही से खाई में गिरी बस, दंपती समेत चार की मौत

## मानक आयु पूरी कर चुकी रोडवेज की बस पिथौरागढ़ से आ रही थी हल्द्वानी

जागरण संवाददाता, हल्द्वानी: पिथौरागढ़ से यात्रियों को लेकर हल्द्वानी आ रही रोडवेज बस चालक की लापरवाही से करीब 300 मीटर गहरी खाई में गिर गई। हादसा भीमताल के आमडाली के पास हुआ। जिसमें पिथौरागढ़ जिले के पति-पत्नी व एक बच्चे समेत चार लोगों की मौत हो गई। चालक-परिचालक समेत 27 यात्री घायल हैं। जिसमें छह यात्रियों की हालत नाजुक बनी हुई है। उन्हें आइसीयू में भर्ती किया गया है। जबकि दो यात्री सुरक्षित रहे और घटनास्थल से ही घर चले गए। सीएम पुष्कर सिंह धामी ने मृतकों के स्वजन को 10 लाख व गंभीर घायलों को तीन लाख तथा सामान्य घायलों को 25 हजार रुपये की आर्थिक मदद देने की घोषणा की है। हादसे का शिकार हुई बस 2016 मॉडल की थी। सात साल के संचालन मानक के हिसाब से गाड़ी की उम्र भी पूरी हो चुकी थी।

बुधवार सुबह पांच बजे रोडवेज के हल्द्वानी डिपो की बस पिथौरागढ़ से यात्रियों को लेकर हल्द्वानी आ रही थी। यात्रियों के अनुसार बस की गति तेज थी। मोड़ पर सामने

● नर्सिंग छात्राओं समेत बस में सवार थे 32 यात्री, विपरीत दिशा से आ रही कार को बचाने के प्रयास में ब्रेक लगाने के बजाय पैराफिट की ओर ले गया बस

● मुख्यमंत्री धामी ने मृतकों के स्वजन को 10 लाख व गंभीर घायलों को तीन लाख रुपये देने की घोषणा की



नेनीताल जिले के भीमताल क्षेत्र में हल्द्वानी डिपो की दुर्घटनाग्रस्त रोडवेज बस ● जागरण

से ओवरटेक करती हुई कार आ गई तो चालक बस पर नियंत्रण नहीं रख सका। इस लापरवाही से बस बाई ओर के पैराफिट को तोड़ते हुए खाई में गिर गई। मौके पर चार यात्रियों की मौत हो गई। छह यात्री गंभीर व बाकी सामान्य रूप से घायल हुए हैं। घायलों में छह पिथौरागढ़ नर्सिंग कालेज की छात्राएं हैं। हादसे

में सुरक्षित रही भीमताल निवासी एक साल की अक्षिता व छह साल की हर्षिता को स्थानीय स्वजन घटनास्थल से ही घर को ले गए। एस्टीएच में भर्ती घायलों के उपचार के लिए एम्स ऋषिकेश से डाक्टरों की एक टीम भी पहुंची है।

इस वर्ष पांच प्रतिशत बढ़ गई सड़क दुर्घटनाओं की संख्या >> पृष्ठ 7

● भीमताल के निकट दुर्भाग्यपूर्ण बस दुर्घटना में चार लोगों की मृत्यु का समाचार अत्यंत हृदय विदारक है। ईश्वर से प्रार्थना है कि दिवंगतों की आत्मा को श्रीचरणों में स्थान व शोक संतप्त को इस अपार दुःख को सहने की शक्ति प्रदान करें। गंभीर रूप से घायल लोगों का डा. सुशीला तिवारी अस्पताल में उपचार चल रहा है और एम्स ऋषिकेश से भी डॉक्टरों की एक टीम को हल्द्वानी भेजा है। मैं ईश्वर से सभी घायलों के शीघ्र स्वास्थ्य लाभ की कामना करता हूँ। पुष्कर सिंह धामी, मुख्यमंत्री

DAJNLIK JAGMAN

DECEMBER 26, 2024

## 8. December 28, 2024 : Landslide at Kwarab Halts Traffic on Haldwani-Almora Highway

The situation for people facing difficulties on the Haldwani-Almora Highway has worsened once again due to a landslide at Kwarab. On Friday evening, a portion of the road at Kwarab collapsed and fell into the Suyal river. As a result, the district administration has ordered a complete halt to traffic on this major highway for even small vehicles. The movement of large vehicles had already been halted earlier. Now, all vehicles will have to take a longer route via Khutani to Dhanachuli.

Since the construction of the new bridge at Kwarab, the mountain slope has been gradually deteriorating. However, the situation has become much worse in the last four months, turning this area into a major danger zone. A team of geologists had previously surveyed the area, but effective measures to prevent soil erosion have yet to be implemented. Union Minister of State for Road Transport, Ajay Tamta, has personally visited the site multiple times. On Thursday, the highway portion near Kwarab collapsed, and as a result, traffic on the highway was halted.

# क्वारब में धंसी सड़क, हल्द्वानी अल्मोड़ा हाईवे पर यातायात बंद

## नदी में समाया सड़क का हिस्सा, प्रशासन ने वाहनों को रोका

संगठन सूत्र, जागरण • अल्मोड़ा: हल्द्वानी अल्मोड़ा राजमार्ग पर क्वारब में पहाड़ी से भूस्खलन के चलते पिछले चार महीने से दुश्चारी झेल रहे लोगों की मुसीबत फिर बढ़ गई है। शुक्रवार शाम क्वारब में सड़क का एक हिस्सा धंसकर सुयाल नदी में समा गया। अब इस प्रमुख राजमार्ग पर छोटे वाहनों का संचालन भी जिला प्रशासन के आदेश के बाद पूरी तरह रोक दिया गया है। बड़े वाहनों का आवागमन पहले से ही ठप था। ऐसे में सभी वाहनों को लंबा फेरा लगाकर खुटानी से धानाचूली वाले रूट से निकलना पड़ेगा।

क्वारब में नया पुल बनने के बाद से ही पहाड़ी धीरे-धीरे दरकनी शुरू हुई थी, लेकिन पिछले चार महीने से हालात बेहद खराब हैं। यह सबसे बड़ा डेंजर जोन बन गया है। पूर्व में भू विज्ञानिज्ञों की टीम इस पहाड़ी का सर्वे कर चुकी है, पर भूधंसाव रोकने के लिए अब तक ठोस उपाय नहीं हो पाए हैं। केंद्रीय सड़क परिवहन राज्य मंत्री अजय टम्टा ने खुद कई बार दौरा किया है। एक दिन पूर्व गुरुवार को



क्वारब के समीप एनएच का हिस्सा धंसने के कारण अब इस राजमार्ग पर यातायात पूरी तरह बंद रहेगा • जागरण

### केवल तीन मीटर रह गई थी सड़क

क्वारब के समीप लगातार भूस्खलन के चलते 30 मीटर लंबाई में सड़क बीते कई दिनों से धंस रही थी। यहां पर सड़क की चौड़ाई केवल तीन मीटर रह गई थी। इस बीच सड़क पर भारी वाहनों के संचालन पर रोक लगा दी गई। जबकि छोटे वाहन खतरों के बीच निकाले जा रहे थे। अब छोटे वाहनों का संचालन भी नहीं हो पाएगा।

जिला प्रशासन ने रात में हाईवे पर वाहनों का संचालन बंद रखने का आदेश जारी किया था। शुक्रवार शाम

सुरक्षा की दृष्टि से राजमार्ग पर यातायात बंद कर दिया गया है। हाईवे को शीघ्र ठीक करने की कार्यवाही की जा रही है, जिससे एनएच पर यातायात सुचारु हो सके।

आलोक कुमार पांडेय,  
जिलाधिकारी अल्मोड़ा

क्वारब के पास हल्की वर्षा हुई तो एनएच का हिस्सा धंसते हुए मलबा सुयाल नदी तक पहुंच गया।

राष्ट्रीय

DAINIK JAGRAN

DECEMBER 28, 2024

## **About Social Development for Communities (SDC) Foundation**

SDC Foundation is a Dehradun-based environmental action and advocacy group engaged in communication, citizen engagement and capacity building in the Himalayan state of Uttarakhand. The foundation works in partnership with institutions of Government of India, Government of Uttarakhand and other stakeholders such as research & academic institutions, community groups, civil society, media partners, NGOs, businesses & trade bodies, schools & colleges in the state.

Climate and environment conservation, waste management, sustainable urbanisation and a basket of sustainable development issues are key focus areas of the foundation.

Anoop Nautiyal

Founder

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