

Char Dham Highway Project

The Char Dham project is a two-lane highway project currently under construction in the state of Uttarakhand by the Border Road Organisation. Upon the completion of the project, it will connect the four important pilgrim towns of Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri and Yamunotri.

The details about the Char Dham Project given in this article will be useful for candidates appearing in the government exams.

Overview of Char Dham Project

The foundation stone of the ₹12,000 crore project was laid at Parade Ground in Dehradun by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on December 27 2016. The highway construction project is called as Char Dham Mahamarg Vikas Pariyojana and its aim is to improve the connectivity to the Chota Char Dham. The Chota Char Dham itself is a pilgrim circuit nestled in the Himalayas.

The highway project will also be will have railway links and several long bridges and tunnels to eliminate accident and slide prone areas

Some more facts about the Char Dham Project is given in the table below:

Char Dham Highway Project	
Total Length of the Highway	719
North End	Mana
South End	Rishikesh
Maintained by	National Highway Authority of India
Proposed Routes	Rishikesh–Yamunotri Rishikesh–Gangotri Rishikesh–Kedarnath Rishikesh–Badrinath

.Environmental Concerns regarding the Char Dham Project

Environmentalists had pointed out that the unregulated cutting of trees and scooping up land at the base of the hills is irreversibly damaging the ecosystem as well as making the regions the project passes through dangerously prone to landslides.

Although the government had given orders to the contractors to treat the slopes before moving on to the next construction point, it was found that most had not done so. This had increased the chances of landslides occurring on a frequent basis.

Other concerns raised included dumping of debris on the slopes itself instead of taking them to designated dumping sites. The debris when dumped on both sides of the banks of a river, narrow its course which led to intense flooding in the past years.

The Supreme Court of India appointed a review committee to look into the matter and it found that several norms were violated during the construction of the project. The committee recommended that the project should continue keeping in mind several environmental factors during the construction of the project in order to safeguard the environment and prevent any loss of life that comes as a result of haphazard construction practices.

Relevant Questions regarding the Char Dham Project?

What has been the latest development regarding the Char Dham Project?

The Chamba Tunnel was inaugurated on May 26, 2020, which is one of the many auxiliary tunnel systems of the Char Dham Project.

The Chamba tunnel is 440 m long and is a Horseshoe type tunnel with 10-metre carriageway width and 5.5m vertical clearance.

Why is the Char Dham Project required?

The Char Dham project is needed because Uttarakhand receives a large footfall of tourists, pilgrims and other travellers. In order to ensure their safety, the existing roads and highway need to be improved. This is where the Char Dham project will play a crucial role.

What are the benefits of the Char Dham Project?

The following are some of the benefits regarding the Char Dham Project:

- It will boost tourism which is the backbone of the state of Uttarakhand
- Will bring down the rate of accidents
- Improved border security as the army can deploy faster to the Chinese border

