



Social Development
for Communities
FOUNDATION

January 2026

Uttarakhand Disaster and Accident Analysis Initiative - UDAAI



Social Development for Communities (SDC) Foundation
Dehradun, Uttarakhand
www.sdcuk.in

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SDC Foundation is a Dehradun based environmental action and advocacy group committed to make a positive impact and secure a sustainable future for our home state Uttarakhand, the Himalayas and beyond.

Material from this publication can be used with due acknowledgement.

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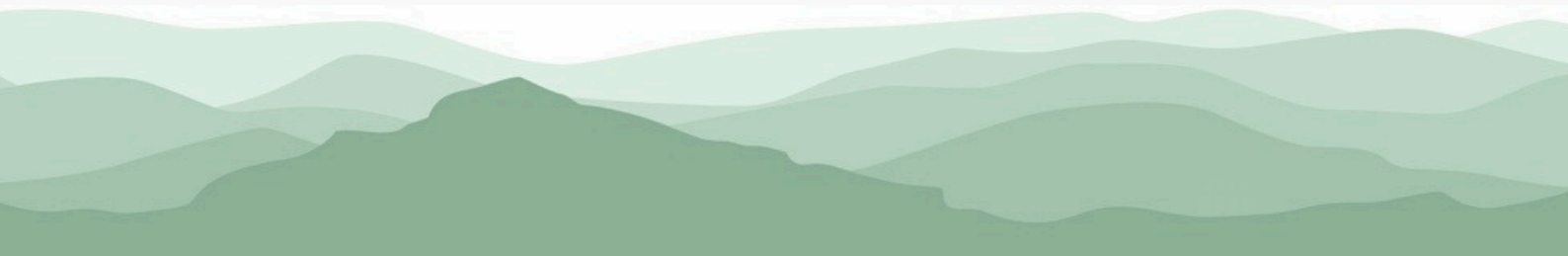


About UDAAI Monthly Reports

Uttarakhand Disaster and 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 for a holistic disaster management and accident minimisation 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 planning of climate actions and disaster management in Uttarakhand.



Summary of UDAAI Report - January 2026

According to developments of January 2026; governance, ecological and disaster management challenges were quite serious in the ecologically rich, yet ecologically fragile, state of Uttarakhand. The case of judicial intervention by the Supreme Court of India on forest encroachments in Rishikesh once again brings forth the pattern of administrative challenges in protection of the notified forest land of the state. The remarks made by the Court alluding to the existence of potential nexus between the power of the bureaucratic institutions and the criminal occupants of land draws great attention to the fact that the regulatory institutions have been failing to protect the environmentally sensitive land long associated with the ashram of Mira Behn. The same weaknesses in forest governance, which are manifested in this month's report, encompass poor monitoring, weak enforcement, and delayed administrative action.

Simultaneously, the State is ever exposed to growing threats on environmental conditions due to climate change and due to the volatility of its mountainous landscape and ecosystem. In 2025, Post-Disaster Needs Assessment has estimated the impacts of natural disasters on the economy to be nearly Rs. 15,000 crore and the infrastructure, water supply systems, housing and health sector have been impacted as well, indicating again how susceptible major systems used by the general population are to highly weather-related events such as natural disasters. Over the past years, monsoon than normal rainy seasons have caused landslides, flash floods and cloudbursts in a number of districts that have affected livelihoods as well as causing massive damage to primary infrastructure.

As reported by scientific research, the unpredictable and intense rains are causing dormant zones of landslides in the Garhwal Himalayas thus posing additional threats along the highways, settlements, and pilgrimage paths. Moreover, the repetitive fire warnings in forests such as in the ecologically sensitive Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve, are indicative that there is an emerging issue in the field of forest management and wildfire preparedness.

All these trends underscore the fact that there is urgent necessity to have stronger environmental policies, better land-use policies, climate-resilient infrastructure policy, and policy of science-based removal of disaster risks in order to safeguard the frail Himalayan ecosystem and provide sustainable development.

1. January 6, 2026: Forest encroachment in state smacks of bureaucrat-squatter nexus: SC

New Delhi: Supreme Court on Monday slammed the Uttarakhand government for being a silent spectator for two decades to rampant encroachment of forest land in Rishikesh, which was allotted in 1950 to Gandhian Mira Behn by the then UP govt, and said it smacked of nexus between the executive and squatters. The Court also sought details of illegal constructions.

A bench of CJI Suryakant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi said the facts of this case, prima facie, show how private individuals systematically grabbed thousands of acres of forest land while the state govt remained in slumber from 2000 till 2023.

Uttarakhand's deputy advocate general Jatinder Kumar Sethi informed the court that the state had recovered around 500 acres of forest land from encroachers in 2023 and an additional 50 acres in the last three days at Rishikesh.

However, the bench asked the state to file a detailed affidavit describing the extent of encroachment, nature of constructions and the officers who were at the helm of affairs between 2000-2023 for protection of govt land in the area.

Of the 2,866 acres of land notified as forest area by the state, a part was leased to Pashulok Sewa Samiti, which was an organization associated with Pashulok Ashram established by British born Mira Behn (Madeleine Slade). The society came under liquidation and surrendered 594 acres of land to the forest department on Oct 23, 1984. Yet certain private individuals took control of the land.

The bench in its previous order had said, what seems shocking to us is that the state of Uttarakhand and its authorities are sitting as silent spectators when the forest land was being systematically grabbed in front of their eyes. It enlarged the scope of the petition and directed the state's chief secretary and principal chief conservator of forest to constitute an inquiry committee to examine all issues and submit a report to SC.

"Meanwhile, all private individuals are restrained from alienating the land, encumbering it or creating any third-party rights. It goes without saying that no construction activity shall be allowed to take place either. The vacant land (other than the residential houses) shall be taken into possession by the forest department and the collector concerned," the bench had ordered on Dec 22 last year.

Forest encroachment in state smacks of bureaucrat-squatter nexus: SC

Seeks Details Of Encroachment And Officials Responsible

Dhanshaya Mahapatra @timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Supreme Court on Monday slammed the Uttarakhand govt for being a silent spectator for two decades to rampant encroachment of forest land in Rishikesh, which was allotted in 1969 to Gandhian Mira Behn by the then JP govt, and said it smacked of nexus between the executive and squatters.

The court also sought details of such illegal constructions. A bench of CJJ Surya Kant and Justice Joydip Banerjee said the facts of this case, prima facie, show how private individuals systematically grabbed thousands of acres of forest land while the state govt remained in slumber from 2000 till 2023.

Uttarakhand's deputy advocate general Indrojit Kumar Sethi informed the court that the state had recovered around 600 acres of forest land

New Bhimtal-Almora road planed to decongest Kainchi Dham stretch

Dipak Dash & Kaushtikya Singh | PTN

New Delhi/Dehradun: Chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami met Union road transport and highways minister Nitin Gadkari in Delhi on Monday to review national highway projects in Uttarakhand, including new proposals that are aimed at easing congestion on key pilgrimage and tourist routes.

During the review, officials said the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd (NHIDCL) will prepare a detailed project report for an alternative road, connecting

from encroachers in 2023 and an additional 50 acres in the last three days at Rishikesh. He said the state would continue the drive against encroachers.

However, the bench said the way squatters enjoyed residential rights unauthorisedly



CM with Union road transport & highways min Nitin Gadkari in Del

March 2027. Progress on the tunnel was affected after a portion collapsed in Nov 2023. Other major points discussed was the Rishikesh bypass project on NH-07. The proposal involves construction of a 12.7 km four-lane bypass from Usonpani through Yognagiri to Kharasarot at an estimated cost of Rs 1,161.3 crore. Dhami also sought approval for several other highway projects. A proposal for a 76 m ROE at Shivampur railway crossing was also discussed. The project, estimated at Rs 516 crore, is expected to ensure uninterrupted traffic between Nepali Parm and Rishikesh's Naraal Chowk.

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TIMES OF INDIA
JANUARY 6, 2025

2. January 14, 2026: State suffered ₹15k-cr loss in disasters in '25: PDNA report

Dehradun: Uttarakhand has suffered a total economic impact of ₹15,103.52 Crore due to disasters in 2025, according to the post disaster needs assessment (PDNA) report submitted by the state disaster management authority (USDMA) to the national disaster management authority (NDMA), officials said on Tuesday. The PDNA provides a detailed, sector-wise assessment of damages, losses, and rehabilitation and reconstruction requirements across social, infrastructure, productive and cross-cutting sectors.

According to the report, the total economic impact includes direct damages amounting to ₹3,792.38 crore, losses of ₹3,121.19 crore, and rehabilitation, reconstruction and recovery needs, under the "build back better" principle, estimated at ₹10,998.95 crore.

In the social sector, the total economic impact was assessed at ₹4,966.85 crore, with housing, health and education emerging as the worst-hit segments. The health sector alone recorded losses of ₹2,579.47 crore, while the housing sector suffered an estimated impact of ₹2,005.48 crore.

The infrastructure sector recorded the highest overall impact at ₹6,225.69 crore. Officials said the water supply sector was the most affected, accounting for losses of ₹4,048.88 crore. Damage to roads was estimated at ₹1,963.29 crore, while the power sector incurred losses of ₹213.52 crore.

The productive sector, which includes agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, fisheries, tourism and forestry, suffered an estimated economic impact of ₹893.94 crore. Among these, tourism was the most affected, with losses pegged at ₹744.94 crore. Under the cross-cutting sector, the report identified disaster risk reduction (DRR) needs of ₹3,017.04 crore for reconstruction and strengthening measures aimed at mitigating the impact of future disasters.

Officials said the report will form the basis for seeking financial assistance from the Centre, enabling faster recovery, protection of livelihoods and strengthening of infrastructure in disaster affected areas across the state.

To be noted, in 2025, the state received nearly 1,420.5 mm of monsoon rainfall (June–September) compared to a normal of about 1,162.7 mm, thus reporting significant

January 2026 - UDAAI Report by SDC Foundation, Uttarakhand

excess of roughly 22%, while in 2024, the hill state witnessed above-normal rainfall, with approximately 1,273 mm recorded against a long-period average of 1,163 mm, marking a surplus of around 10%.

During the 2023 monsoon season, the state received about 1,203 mm of rainfall against a normal of around 1,163 mm, recording a marginal surplus of about 3%.

The year 2025 was one of the most challenging years for Uttarakhand, as the Himalayan state grappled with a series of natural disasters that left behind a trail of destruction, loss of lives, and a severe financial burden. From Dharali in Uttarkashi to Tharali in Chamoli, and even the state capital Dehradun, almost every region witnessed the devastating impact of extreme weather events, landslides, flash floods and cloudbursts, once again highlighting the fragile ecology of the state. A massive mudslide struck Dharali village in Uttarkashi district on August 5 following flash floods in high-altitude villages, triggering a sudden flow of debris and water through the settlements. Over two dozen people were killed after intense rainfall triggered cloudbursts, floods, landslides, and erosion in Dehradun in September last year.

State suffered ₹15k-cr loss in disasters in '25: PDNA report

HT Correspondent
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The PDNA provides a detailed, sector-wise assessment of damages, losses, and rehabilitation and reconstruction requirements across social, infrastructure, productive and cross-cutting sectors. Officials said Uttarakhand has become the first state in the country to conduct a PDNA covering the entire state.

According to the report, the total economic impact includes direct damages amounting to ₹3,792.38 crore, losses of ₹312.19 crore, and rehabilitation, reconstruction and recovery needs, under the "build back better" principle, estimated at ₹10,998.95 crore.

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Secretary, disaster management and rehabilitation, Vinod Kumar Suman said the PDNA was prepared keeping in mind the state's fragile geography, mountainous terrain and the growing impact of climate change. "The objective of the report is not only to assess damage but also to provide a clear roadmap for planned rehabilitation and reconstruction to build a safer and more disaster-resilient Uttarakhand," he said.

Officials said the report will form the basis for seeking financial assistance from the Centre, enabling faster recovery, protection of livelihoods and strengthening of infrastructure in disaster-affected areas across the state.

To be noted, in 2025, the state received nearly 1,420.5 mm of monsoon rainfall (June-September) compared to a normal of about 1,162.7 mm, thus reporting significant excess of roughly 22%, while in 2024, the hill state witnessed above-normal rainfall, with approximately 1,273 mm recorded against a long-period average of 1,163 mm, marking a surplus of around 10%.

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HINDUSTAN TIMES
JANUARY 14, 2026

3. January 15, 2026: After 6 days, fire in Nanda Devi reserve under control

Dehradun: Forest officials on Wednesday said the wild fire that has been burning for six days in the valley of flowers forest range, within Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve in Chamoli district, has been largely brought under control, with only some isolated hotspots still smouldering.

Chamoli divisional forest officer Sarvesh Dubey said the fire was confined to forest areas between the Lakshman Ganga and Alaknanda rivers. An assessment of losses could not be done through the aerial survey as it is a surface fire and not a crown fire. Prima facie, dry grass appears to have burnt due to a lack of snow and rainfall, he said.

Chief conservator of forests (CCF) Sushant Patnaik, the state nodal officer for forest fires, said the smoke seen during the aerial survey was white, indicating that the fire

was no longer active and was emanating from leftover residue. “The fire reached high elevations near the ridge point, close to the fire line. It is in a stage of containment and is dying out. After the recce, we did not find any reason to seek further assistance,” he said.

Forest Survey of India (FSI) on Wednesday issued seven large fire alerts — six in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, and one in Arunachal Pradesh. Since the onset of the winter wildfire season on Nov 1, Uttarakhand has received 1,700 forest fire alerts from FSI, followed by Maharashtra (1,048), Karnataka (924), Madhya Pradesh (868) and Chhattisgarh (862). The state forest department has confirmed 40 incidents so far, which have affected around 19 hectares of forest land across the state.

‘After 6 days, fire in Nanda Devi reserve under control’

Officials: Some Isolated Hotspots Still Smouldering

Shivani.Azad
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Dehradun: Forest officials on Wednesday said the wildfire that has been burning for six days in Valley of Flowers forest range, within Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve in Chamoli district, has been largely brought under control, with only some isolated hotspots still smouldering.

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Officials said two frontline teams have been deployed as a precaution in case the fire reignites. When asked about the cause, Patnaik said it appeared to be a natural forest fire triggered by dry weather, adding that sparks from falling stones on the slopes may also have started it. He ruled out human involvement, saying the terrain is inaccessible, with steep gradients at around 14,000 ft.

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Fire was mainly in forest areas between the Lakshman Ganga and Alaknanda rivers

TIMES OF INDIA
JANUARY 15, 2026

4. January 16, 2026: ‘Erratic Monsoon, Old Fault Lines Surge Landslides in Garhwal Himalayas’

Dehradun: A sharp rise in landslides across the Garhwal Himalayas during the 2025 monsoon was "primarily driven by intense and erratic rainfall that reactivated old, dormant landslide zones", according to a new study published in ‘Landslides’, a peer-reviewed journal of Springer Nature. The study found that "areas which had remained relatively stable for years failed again after prolonged rainfall saturated soil and rock material, reducing shear strength along pre-existing slip surfaces".

The research, titled ‘Preliminary assessment of heavy rainfall-induced landslides and reactivation of old landslides in the Garhwal Himalayas’, highlighted the "inherent vulnerability" of the region, characterised by fragile geological formations, steep slopes and active tectonics.

Based on field investigations and post-event analysis, the researchers documented a marked increase in landslide activity during Aug and Sept 2025, with Chamoli,

Rudraprayag and Uttarkashi emerging as the "worst-affected districts". Several known landslide-prone locations, including Pagalnala, Langsi, and stretches along the Gangotri and Yamunotri highways, witnessed repeated slope failures. The incidents disrupted traffic for extended periods, cut off villages and severely affected the Char Dham Yatra, with pilgrim movement impacted for weeks, the research said.

Using rainfall data from India-WRIS and official disaster reports, the study found that monsoon rainfall in 2025 was among the "highest recorded in the past five years at several locations". Gaurikund in Rudraprayag district received more than 4,800 mm of rainfall during the monsoon months, while Uttarkashi, Pipalkoti and Kalagarh also experienced significantly above-normal precipitation. Short-duration extreme rainfall events, with prolonged wet spells, played a critical role in triggering slope failures across the region, the authors said.

Field observations revealed frequent debris flows and shallow landslides along highways, rural roads and near settlements. The concentration of infrastructure and habitation in known landslide-prone zones significantly increased exposure and risk, particularly when old landslides were reactivated. The researchers also pointed to changing monsoon rainfall patterns linked to climate variability, noting that "intense, short-duration rainfall events are becoming more frequent and are likely to further escalate landslide hazards in the Himalayas".

The study called for detailed landslide inventory mapping, continuous monitoring of vulnerable slopes and the integration of rainfall thresholds into early-warning systems. It also stressed the need for stricter regulation of construction activities in fragile mountain terrain. "Without urgent mitigation measures and improved land use planning, landslide risks in the Garhwal Himalayas will continue to rise, with serious consequences for lives, livelihoods and regional connectivity," the authors warned.



TIMES OF INDIA
 JANUARY 16, 2026

5. January 23, 2026: In Guchhupanni, neither the Roads Damaged By the Disaster were Repaired Nor the Water Source was Restored

The disaster that struck last year in September also affected the tourist destination of Guchhupanni. Several bridges collapsed due to rising water levels. The construction of these broken bridges has not been completed even after four months, causing problems for the locals. Furthermore, the natural water source was damaged in the disaster, which local traders and residents rely on.

Residents said that reconstruction works should be completed urgently since the tourist season will start soon. If this is not done on time, it will impact the tourist season.

Residents further added that the taps here only supply silty water. People don't use this water. They cook with stream water. The disaster also caused the causeway leading to the stream to collapse, reducing the water level. This is causing difficulties in fetching water. Furthermore, residents say that beautification work in the area is lacking. This work should be completed before the tourist season begins.

देहरादून के प्रमुख पर्यटन स्थल गुच्छू पानी में आपदा से क्षतिग्रस्त रास्तों का निर्माण नहीं हो पाया है। रास्ते न बनने से लोग प्राकृतिक जलस्रोत तक नहीं पहुंच पा रहे हैं। जलस्रोत की मरम्मत न होने से यहां जल प्रपात का पानी कम हो गया है। गर्मियों में इसके और कम होने की आशंका है। वहीं सौंदर्यीकरण कार्य न होने से पर्यटन सीजन में कारोबार प्रभावित होने की आशंका है।



गुच्छूपानी में आपदा के कारण रेस्टोरेंट के आगे का हिस्सा बह जाने के बाद कट्टे लगाए हैं। • हिन्दुस्तान

गुच्छूपानी में न तो आपदा से टूटे रास्ते बने, न जलस्रोत की मरम्मत की गई

पि

उत्ते वर्षावित्तार भाग में आई आपदा का असर पर्यटन स्थल गुच्छूपानी में भी पड़ा। यहां पर जल स्तर बढ़ने से कई पुल बह गए। इन टूटे हुए पुलों का निर्माण कार्य बंद होने के बाद भी पूरा नहीं हो सका है। इससे स्थानीय लोगों को परंपरागत ही राहें हैं। साथ ही आपदा में प्राकृतिक जल स्रोत भी क्षतिग्रस्त हो गया। इसपर स्थानीय व्यापारी और आसपास के लोग निभर हैं। इन लोगों को खेत तक पहुंचने का रास्ता नहीं मिल पा रहा है। स्थानीय लोगों का कहना है कि यहां पर निर्माण कार्य को जल्द पूरा किया जाना चाहिए। अब पर्यटन सीजन शुरू होने वाला है। यह समय पर पूरा नहीं हुआ तो इसका यहां के पर्यटन पर बहुत बुरा असर पड़ेगा।

आपके अपने अखबार हिन्दुस्तान के बोले देहरादून अभियान के तहत स्थानीय व्यापारी और लोगों से बातचीत की गई। इस दौरान लोगों ने बताया कि यहां पर रास्तों से चने वाला पानी आता है। इस पानी का लोग प्रयोग नहीं करते हैं। लोग धारा के पानी से ही खाना बनाते हैं। वहीं आपदा के कारण धारा तक जाने वाला पुराना टट गया और धारा के पानी का स्तर भी कम हो गया। इससे लोगों को पानी लाने में दिक्कत हो रही है। साथ ही लोगों का कहना है कि क्षेत्र के सौंदर्यीकरण का काम भी नहीं हो रहा है। पर्यटन सीजन शुरू होने से पहले इस कार्य को पूरा किया जाना चाहिए।

लोगों का कहना है कि यहां पर नियमित पानी का समय नहीं है। आमतौर पर सुबह 7 से 9 बजे तक पानी आता है। लेकिन यहां भी स्थान नहीं हो पाता है, क्योंकि यहां के समय पानी आ जाता है तो कुछ काम चल जाता है। वहीं लोगों का कहना है कि गुच्छू में अपने जगह स्थित मंदिर है जिसका सौंदर्यीकरण किया जाना चाहिए। लोगों का कहना है कि यदि सौंदर्यीकरण का काम भी नहीं हो रहा है तो इसका असर कारोबार पर भी पड़ना तय है।

प्रस्तुति: कुमुद नौदियाल



गुच्छूपानी में आपदा के कारण प्राकृतिक जल स्रोत तक जाने वाला रास्ता पूरी तरह से बरस हो गया। इससे लोगों को अवाजाही में दिक्कत हो रही है। • हिन्दुस्तान

पार्षद बोले

इस प्राकृतिक स्रोत पर गुच्छूपानी, अनारवाला, नयागांव और जोहड़ी गांव के लोग निर्भर हैं। लेकिन आपदा में यहां के पुल टूटने की वजह से लोगों को अब यहां तक पहुंचने में दिक्कत हो रही है। इन पुलों का जल्द से जल्द निर्माण किया जाना चाहिए। जिससे लोगों की दिक्कतें दूर हो सकें।

- सुरजीत बोहरा, एडव. बर्ड एज. भारत

बोले जिम्मेदार

प्रतिनिधि मंडल कार्यालय में आया था। उनकी समस्याओं को मद्देनजर रखते हुए कार्रवाई शुरू कर दी है। गुच्छूपानी का सर्वे कराकर यहां पर जल्द ही निर्माण कार्य शुरू किया जाएगा। - विजेंद्र पांडे, जिला एडव. अधिकारी देहरादून

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.

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PS: Errors or omissions in UDAAI documentation, if any, are purely unintentional. In case any errors or key omissions are detected or any fresh updates are available for events that are already documented, SDC Foundation may kindly be notified at the email address contactsdcuk@gmail.com. We shall make the necessary corrections in subsequent versions of the monthly reports of UDAAI.

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