{ FRESH RAPE COMPLAINT AGAINST HARAK SINGH RAWAT }

State seeks old case files from CBI, Delhi Police

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DEHRADUN: The Uttarakhand Police has written to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) seeking documents related to a 2003 case after a 39-year-old woman from Assam levelled fresh rape allegations against former state minister and Congress leader Harak Singh Rawat, officials said on Thursday.

Police have also asked the Delhi Police to share records of a separate 2016 case filed by the same woman against the senior Congress leader.

The woman had first lodged a criminal complaint against Rawat in 2003 during the ND Tiwari-led Congress government in Uttarakhand, alleging that he had fathered her child. The controversy had forced Rawat to resign from the state cabinet. However, a CBI probe and a subsequent DNA test returned negative, prompting the central agency to file a closure report in the court, giving him a clean chit. Later, in 2016, the woman registered another rape FIR against Rawat at Delhi's Safdarjung Enclave police station.

Doiwala circle officer (CO) Vandana Verma said, "We have written to the CBI and Delhi Police seeking documents of the old cases registered in 2003 and 2016, respectively, on the complaint of the same woman against Rawat. We will first gather information from the previous probes as we begin collecting evidence in connection with the fresh allegations. It may take some time as we need to connect the dots."


Harak Singh Rawat

Verma added that police will soon record the complainant's statement. "We will issue a notice asking her to appear before us and submit her statement," she said.

On November 5, the woman submitted a fresh complaint to the Uttarakhand Police seeking a new DNA test to secure legal rights and paternity recognition for her 23-year-old son.

Following the complaint, Dehradun Police initiated an inquiry and appointed Doiwala CO as the probe officer.

The development gained political traction after Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma met the complainant and extended his support.

"What Harak Singh Rawat from Uttarakhand did to her is extremely wrong and condemnable. No one should have to go through the atrocities she endured. In this fight for justice, I stand firmly by her side," Sarma wrote on X on Wednesday, a day after meeting the woman.

Meanwhile, Rawat has dismissed the renewed allegations as a "political conspiracy" orchestrated by the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) ahead of upcoming elections, while saying he is open to a court-monitored DNA test.

"I don't trust investigative agencies like the CBI under this regime. They could conduct a fake DNA test," Rawat said on Monday. "If a court-monitored DNA test is ordered, I am completely ready for it. If even a single allegation is proven against me, I will retire from politics."

Citing hospital records, Rawat claimed another man was listed as the father of the woman's son.

"If I turn out to be innocent, who will be held responsible? Is there no justice here, that anyone can level allegations against anyone?" he asked.

Alleging a diversionary tactic by the ruling party, Rawat said, "It is a conspiracy by the BJP to divert attention from the 2022 Pauri Garhwal receptionist murder case. They also know that the appointment of Dushyant Gautam as Sikkim Governor will hurt them politically. The BJP should instead ensure the CBI probe into the 2022 case is completed."

Referring to past probes, Rawat said that he was cleared during the Atal Bihari Vajpayee-led central government in 2003, and that the Delhi Police had also filed a final report closing the 2016 case after finding the charges untrue.

A prominent Thakur leader from the Garhwal region, Rawat was first elected as an MLA from Pauri in 1991, becoming Uttar Pradesh's youngest minister at the time. Known for switching political allegiances, he led a high-profile rebellion against the Harish Rawat-led Congress government in 2016 to join the BJP, before returning to the Congress ahead of the 2022 assembly polls. He currently serves as the chairman of the Uttarakhand Pradesh Congress Committee's election management committee.

16-KM STRETCH OF GANGA GHATS TO EASE 2027 ARDH KUMBH RUSH

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HARIDWAR: Mela administration in Haridwar is developing a 16-km network of well-equipped Ganga ghats ahead of 2027 Ardh Kumbh fair to decongest core Brahmakund Har-ki-Pauri area, officials said on Thursday.

Drawing from crowd management lessons during the 2021 Mahakumbh and the 2016 Ardh Kumbh, the initiative aims to offer devotees convenient alternatives for taking holy dip across the main Ganga river, the Ganga canal, and the canal escape channel, easing pressure on the sanctum sanctorum during peak bathing days, officials added.

As part of the infrastructure push, 10 new permanent ghats spanning 3 km are being constructed specifically for the 2027 congregation, while an existing 13-km stretch is being renovated and upgraded.

"Devotees will have a seamless experience across the entire 16-km stretch, as all basic amenities are being provided at both new and renovated ghats. This will significantly ease pilgrim pressure at Brahmakund Har-ki-Pauri, ensuring safety and convenience throughout the mega fair," said mela officer Sonika.

The move has been welcomed by key stakeholders, including Ganga Sabha, Akhada Parishad and teerth purohits (priests).

"Millions of devotees are expected to arrive... Since Har-ki-Pauri largely remains reserved for Akhada seers during Shahi Snan (royal bath), these new ghats will provide vital alternatives for general pilgrims," said Dr Sunil Kumar Batra, founder of Haridwar Nagrik Manch.

Centre signalled approval for AIIA, and IISER: Govt

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DEHRADUN: The central government has given positive signals on the proposals forwarded by chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami to set up Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) and the All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) in Uttarakhand, a release from the state government said on Thursday.

Dhami, in his proposals to the central government, had sought establishment of IISER, setting up of AIIA at Khurpia Farm in Kichha (US Nagar). Dhami also asked the central government to declare Uttarkashi–Tilwara road as a National Highway (NH).

The release said Union minister for education Pralhad Joshi wrote to Dhami, assuring that the proposal will be duly considered during the future expansion phase of central educational institutions.

In his letter, Joshi said that Uttarakhand already hosts several premier central institutions, including Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee and Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Kashipur. He said that the central government is working closely with state to strengthen and expand existing institutions so they can be developed in full alignment with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

On Dhami's proposal to upgrade Uttarkashi–Kamad–Ayarkhal–Budhakedar–Chamiyala–Ghansali–Tilwara motor road into a National Highway, Union minister for road transport and highways Nitin Gadkari assured the CM that the proposal for the new stretch will be taken up for consideration once the central government's revised policy framework for notifying new national highways is finalised, the release said.


Pushkar Singh Dhami

On Dhami's request to set up an AIIA at Khurpia Farm in Kichha, Union minister of state (independent charge) for Ayush and minister of state for health and family welfare Prataprao Jadhav said that the Centre has received Uttarakhand's formal submission. He said following Union finance minister's announcement in Budget 2026 speech to set up three new AIIAs across India, proposals were invited from eligible states and UTs under a challenge-method framework formulated by Cabinet Secretariat. He assured Uttarakhand's bid will be evaluated in accordance with prescribed procedures and applicable norms, the release said.

Dhami said, "Timely execution of these initiatives will give fresh impetus to scientific research, traditional healthcare, and road infrastructure, accelerating the overall development of Uttarakhand."

'ECO-FRIENDLY' FIRE PELLETS' UNIT SET UP IN SONPRAYAG

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MUSSOORIE: In a first-of-its-kind environmental initiative, the state government, in collaboration with non-profit Himalayan Institute for Environment, Ecology & Development (HIFEED), has established a manufacturing unit in Sonprayag, Rudraprayag district, to produce eco-friendly fire pellets from mule dung and pine needles (pirul), officials said on Thursday.

The facility is designed to tackle long-standing challenge of managing equine waste along the Kedarnath pilgrimage route. Rudraprayag district magistrate (DM) Vishal Mishra inspected the facility on Wednesday and reviewed its operations and production process.

While the unit is not yet operating at a large scale, officials said that initial output has been promising. The biomass pellets produced at the plant will fuel hot water generators installed at Kedarnath Dham, ensuring a free, round-the-clock hot water supply for visiting pilgrims.

Udit Ghildiyal, director of HIFEED, said, "The biomass pellets are carbon-neutral, making them a better fuel option from an environmental conservation perspective. With the production unit now established, we will be able to address the animal waste issue effectively."

Beyond powering boilers at the Himalayan shrine, the pellets will be used in specialised stoves provided to local eateries along the yatra route, significantly curbing LPG and diesel consumption. Officials added that the biofuel will also be supplied to industrial furnaces across Uttarakhand to help reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

Cong leader's brother booked for road rage

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RUDRAPUR: A Congress leader's brother, his nephews, and several others have been booked for allegedly abducting and assaulting two men following a road rage dispute in Rudrapur of Udham Singh Nagar district on Wednesday, officers said on Thursday.

"We have initiated an investigation into the assault case triggered by an altercation over overtaking vehicles. Appropriate action will be taken accordingly," said Vibhav Saini, circle officer (CO), Rudrapur.

According to a complaint lodged by Veeru, a resident of Durga Colony, a heated argument erupted between him and Bhurarani resident Raghav Khera over overtaking a vehicle. Although the matter was initially pacified, Raghav's father, Naveen Khera, and brother, Vivek Khera, along with several accomplices, later arrived at Veeru's residence. Not finding him at home, the group allegedly tracked Veeru down on Thandi Sadak, abducted him and his friend, and took them to a farmhouse in Hans Vihar Colony, where they were allegedly assaulted.

Based on the complaint, police registered a first information report (FIR) against Naveen Khera, Raghav Khera, Vivek Khera, Monty Rawat, Pintu, Kashish Khera, and eight unidentified individuals under relevant sections of the BNS.

Naveen Khera is the brother of Mohan Khera, state secretary of the Uttarakhand Congress, who previously contested the Rudrapur mayoral election on a party ticket.

4 killed in 2 crashes in Kumaon division: Cops

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DEHRADUN/HALDWANI: Four people were killed and as many were injured in two road accidents in Uttarakhand's Kumaon division late on Wednesday night, officers said on Thursday.

In the first incident in Almora, three people—including a woman, her teenage daughter and the driver—were killed after a Bolero Max plunged into a nearly 400-metre-deep gorge near Harda village on Sairaghat-Pithoragarh (Kunj Kimaula) motor road.

According to preliminary information, the woman and her daughter, both residents of Harda village, were returning home after celebrating Bhai Dooj in Pithoragarh when the vehicle went out of control. The impact left the vehicle completely mangled, and all three occupants died on the spot.

The deceased were identified as Basanti Devi (40), Beena Devi (19) and driver Hayat Singh (36).

The crash came to light around 9 am on Thursday when local women heading to forest to collect grass spotted the wreckage and alerted villagers.

Police subsequently launched a recovery operation with the help of locals, facing significant challenges due to the steep terrain and depth of the gorge.

State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) commandant Arpan Yaduvanshi said, "A rescue team led by sub-inspector Pankaj Dangwal from the SDRF Sariyapani post reached the spot and began rescue operations in coordination with local police and residents. The team recovered bodies of all three from the mangled vehicle, and handed them over to police."


The mangled vehicle in the Almora accident.

In a separate accident around midnight in Nainital district, a 29-year-old man was killed and four others were injured after their Swift Dzire swerved off the road and rolled into a 200-metre-deep gorge near Kainchi Dham.

The driver, Anuj Tiwari (29) of Shekhpur village, died on the spot, while the four passengers—Sunny, Ravi, Sanchit, and Sandeep Sharma—were injured in the incident. They were rescued and shifted to the community health centre in Bhowali. All five occupants were residents of Uttar Pradesh's Bareilly.

Yaduvanshi said a team led by sub-inspector Devendra Kumar from the Khairna post carried out a joint rescue operation with the local police, navigating the steep slope in difficult conditions to pull out the victims and retrieve Tiwari's body.

As snow vanishes, Auli banks on 15-yr-old defunct snow guns to save ski hub identity

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DEHRADUN: For 15 years, artificial snow-making machines purchased at an estimated cost of ₹6.5 crore for the 2011 South Asian Winter Games in Auli have lain defunct - even as erratic and dwindling snowfall has triggered plummeting tourist footfall and repeated cancellation of winter events, including national skiing and snowboarding championships.

Once hailed as India's premier skiing destination, Auli has steadily been losing its sheen, sparking anxiety among adventure sports operators, hoteliers, and restaurateurs.

According to officials aware of the matter, the infrastructure comprises 26 snow guns—22 static and four mobile—along with an artificial lake constructed specifically to supply water to the system. While an attempt was made in 2018 to revive the machinery, it failed to yield results.

In recent years, Auli's snowfall has become increasingly brief and unpredictable, forcing cancellation of several skiing tournaments. Stakeholders say that had snow-making system been operational, many of these events could have been salvaged, cushioning blow to winter tourism and local economy.


Local stakeholders are sceptical of the exercise. HT

Originally developed as a paramilitary base, Auli evolved into a sought-after skiing hub for both tourists and professional athletes. Perched at an altitude of about 2,800 metres and flanked by dense oak and coniferous forests, the destination offers panoramic views of Himalayan peaks, including Nanda Devi (7,816 metres), India's second-highest mountain.

Months after locals and tourism stakeholders staged a multi-day protest in January under the banner of 'Auli Bachao' (Save Auli)—warning that the town's identity was under threat and demanding the activation of the idle machinery, authorities conducted an initial trial of the long-dormant system on Tuesday, sparking cautious optimism for the upcoming winter season.

Ajay Bhatt, president of the Uttarakhand Winter Games Association, said the preliminary trial focused on testing the water supply network.

"We needed to check whether water was reaching the snow guns from the pump houses and if the machines could spray it properly. It took us 20 days to repair the system, and the machines are now spraying water. We now require favourable temperature and humidity levels to produce artificial snow, which we expect after December 20," Bhatt said.

He added that the focus will be on covering the upper slopes where temperatures are more conducive. "A mega skiing event hasn't been held here since 2011. Our effort is to organise a National Skiing Winter Carnival this year and build on its success. Artificial snow acts as a crucial layer of support that preserves natural snow and boosts tourism," he said, adding tourist numbers declined in recent years due to lack of snow.

Tourism secretary Dheeraj Garbyal said that the state government is working alongside Winter Games Association and Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam (GMVN) to restore the 2011 equipment. "The first phase of work is complete. Once temperatures drop to favourable levels in December, we will begin producing artificial snow to supplement natural snowfall," Garbyal said, adding that the government plans to host a national-level winter event this season.

When contacted, CS Tomar, director of India Meteorological Department in Dehradun, said the weather department does not have a weather observatory at Auli to officially track long-term snowfall depletion trends.

However, local stakeholders are sceptical of the revival exercise. Santosh Kunwar, founder of Auli Skiing School, dismissed the trial as an "eyewash" and a waste of public funds.

"Only a single snow gun was operated recently to mislead senior officials. When we protested earlier this year, authorities had promised a technical survey to assess whether the outdated machinery is viable or if new units need to be procured," he alleged. "An expert called in from Himachal Pradesh clearly stated that these old machines are obsolete and only function at extremely low temperatures. A new machine should be brought in on a trial basis to test if current climatic conditions here are suitable for artificial snow production."

Responding to the concerns, Bhatt said, "The current system is being maintained by GMVN. If it functions well, roping in experts will not be an issue."

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(RBI/DSIM/HS/26-27/01/CPPP)

Applications are invited for empanelment with the Department of Statistics and Information Management (DSIM), RBI for the above-mentioned surveys. Selection of agencies will be done on the basis of eligibility criteria explained in the tender document. Detailed tender document including submission date/address is available on the RBI website (www.rbi.org.in) and the GeM CPPP portal (https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app). Interested agencies may submit their completed application by **12:00 noon on December 14, 2026.**

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E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE/MOVABLE PROPERTIES "APPENDIX- IV-A [See proviso to Rule 6 (2) & 9(1)]

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable/Movable Assets under the Securaisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 6 (2) & 9(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and In particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Bank of Baroda, Secured Creditor, will be sold on **"As is where is", "As Is what is", and "Whatever there is"** for recovery of below mentioned account/s. The details of Borrower/s/Guarantor/s/Secured Asset/s/Dues/Reserve Price/e-Auction date & Time, EMD and Bid Increase Amount are mentioned below -

Sl. No:	Name & Address of the Borrowers/Guarantors	Details of Movable/Immovable Property	Reserve Price	Date and Time of Commencement of E-Auction	Date of Demand Notice / Date of Possession / Outstanding Amount
1.	**1. M/s Samrat Enterprises,** Through its Proprietor Mrs. Monika Agarwal W/o Mr. Sanjeev Agarwal, Add : Plot no. 8/1, Himalayan Food Park, Mahuakhera, Kashipur, District Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand- 244713. **2. Mrs Monika Agarwal W/o Mr. Sanjeev Agarwal (Proprietor M/s Samrat Enterprises),** Add : Plot no. 8/1, Himalayan Food Park, Mahuakhera, Kashipur, District- Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand- 244713. **3. Mrs. Rajbala Agarwal W/o Mr. Rakesh Agarwal (Guarantor),** Add : Ward No. 11, Mohalla Ojhan, Kashipur, District- Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand - 244713 **4. Mr. Saurabh Agarwal S/o Mr. Rakesh Kumar Agarwal (Guarantor),** Add : Ward No. 11, Mohalla Ojhan, Kashipur, District- Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand- 244713. **5. Mrs. Disha Agarwal W/o Mr. Gaurav Agarwal (Guarantor),** Add : Ward No. 11, Mohalla Ojhan, Kashipur, District- Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand- 244713. **6. Mrs. Deepti Agarwal W/o Mr. Saurabh Agarwal (Guarantor),** Add : Ward No. 11, Mohalla Ojhan, Kashipur, District- Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand- 244713. **7. Mr. Sanjeev Agarwal S/o Mr. Shanker Lal (Guarantor),** Add : H NO. 24 B/2, Adarsh Colony, Civil Lines, Rampur, Uttar Pradesh- 244901. **8. Mr. Mohd. Ali S/o Mr. Mohbbe Ali (Guarantor),** Add : Mohalla Allikhan, Ward No. 10, Kashipur, District- Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand- 244713.	A property i.e, Land & Building situated at Khasra no. 304, 305 and Plot No. 8/1 situated at Mahuakhera Ganj, Kashipur, Udham Singh Nagar belonging to Smt. Monika Agarwal W/o Mr. Sanjeev Agarwal (Lease deed Sr. No. 6348, dated 01.09.2017 has been executed by Himalayan Food Park in favour of Mrs. Monika Agarwal W/o Mr. Sanjeev Agarwal). Admeasuring area 21520 Sqft or 2000 Sq Mtr. Boundaries of properties as per Lease deed are as under : East- Plot of Others, West- Plot of Others, North- 15 mts Wide Road, South- Chak Road.	₹ 1,98,00,000.00 EMD ₹ 19,80,000.00 Minimum Bid Increment Amount ₹ 25,000.00 For Terms & Condition Please Scan this QR	05.12.2026 12:00 PM to 05:00 PM Status of Possession Physical	05.01.2024 20.05.2024 ₹ 3,59,39,936.00 (Rupees Three Crore Fifty Nine Lakh Thirty Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Thirty Six Only) + Rs. 14,73,943.15 (Rupees Fourteen Lakh Seventy Three Thousand Nine Hundred Forty Three And Paise Fifteen Only) (Unrealized Interest) + Unapplied Interest + Legal Charges + Other Charge & Interest w.e.f 26.12.2023

For details terms & conditions of sale, please refer to the link provided in : https://www.bankofbaroda.in/e-auction.html and https://baanknet.com Prospective bidders may contact the authorized officer on Tel No. : 8477000519, 8477009621.

Property Inspection Date & Time : 30.11.2026 from 12:00 PM to 05:00 PM | STATUTORY 15 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER SARFAESI ACT, 2002.

The borrowers/guarantors are hereby notified to pay the sum as mentioned above along with upto date interest and ancillary expenses before date of auction, failing which the property will be auctioned/sold and balance dues, if any, will be recovered with interest and cost.

Date : 12.11.2026 Place : Bank of Baroda, Regional Stressed Asset Recovery Branch, Rudrapur **Authorised Officer**

Army jawan among three held for woman's murder in Nainital

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HALDWANI: Nainital police on Thursday arrested three men, including an Army jawan, for allegedly murdering a 56-year-old woman in Kishanpur Choi village of the district as part of a revenge plot linked to the killing of the soldier's father in 2023, officers said.

According to police, the accused allegedly assaulted the woman before drowning her. Investigators have also seized a car suspected to have been used in the crime, along with wooden sticks and other blunt objects allegedly used in the assault.

Addressing a press conference at Ramnagar police station, senior superintendent of police (SSP) Manjunath TC said the incident came to light on November 10 when police received a call via Dial 112 emergency service regarding a woman's body lying outside the residence of one Trilok Singh Bisht in Kishanpur Choi.

"A police team rushed to the spot and identified the deceased as Vimla Devi, wife of Khilaf Singh Bisht. As the body bore severe injury marks, a forensic team was called in to collect scientific evidence from the scene," he said, adding, "Based on a formal complaint lodged by her son, Kundan Singh Bisht, a FIR was registered against unidentified assailants under Sections 332(c) (house-trespass), 103(1) (murder), and 352 (intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of peace) of the BNS."

ATTACK WAS PART OF A REVENGE PLOT LINKED TO THE SOLDIER'S FATHER'S KILLING IN '23, POLICE SAID

A special team led by superintendent of police (SP) Harbans Singh was constituted. During the probe, investigators scanned CCTV footage from the locality, which allegedly captured three men assaulting the victim, forcibly abducting her, and subsequently dumping her body from a vehicle near the crime scene.

"Technical surveillance and sustained field investigations helped us zero in on the suspects," the SSP added.

Police identified the accused as Mohit Fartyal (32), a resident of Kishanpur Choi, along with Sairan (21) and Mohammad Abbuzar (22), both residents of Khatadi in Ramnagar. Officers said that Fartyal is currently posted with the Rajputana Rifles regiment of the Indian Army.

"Preliminary interrogation revealed that Mohit's father, Govind Singh Bisht, was murdered in 2023, and the deceased woman's sons were named as accused in that case. Harbouring a deep-seated grudge against the family, Mohit orchestrated the fatal attack to avenge his father's death," SSP Manjunath said.

Police further revealed that the trio was intercepted near the Ramlila Ground in Ramnagar while they were allegedly en route to Chaukhutia in Almora district to eliminate the victim's sons as well.

All three accused were produced before a local court on Thursday and remanded to judicial custody, police said, adding that further investigation into the matter is underway.