



Courses

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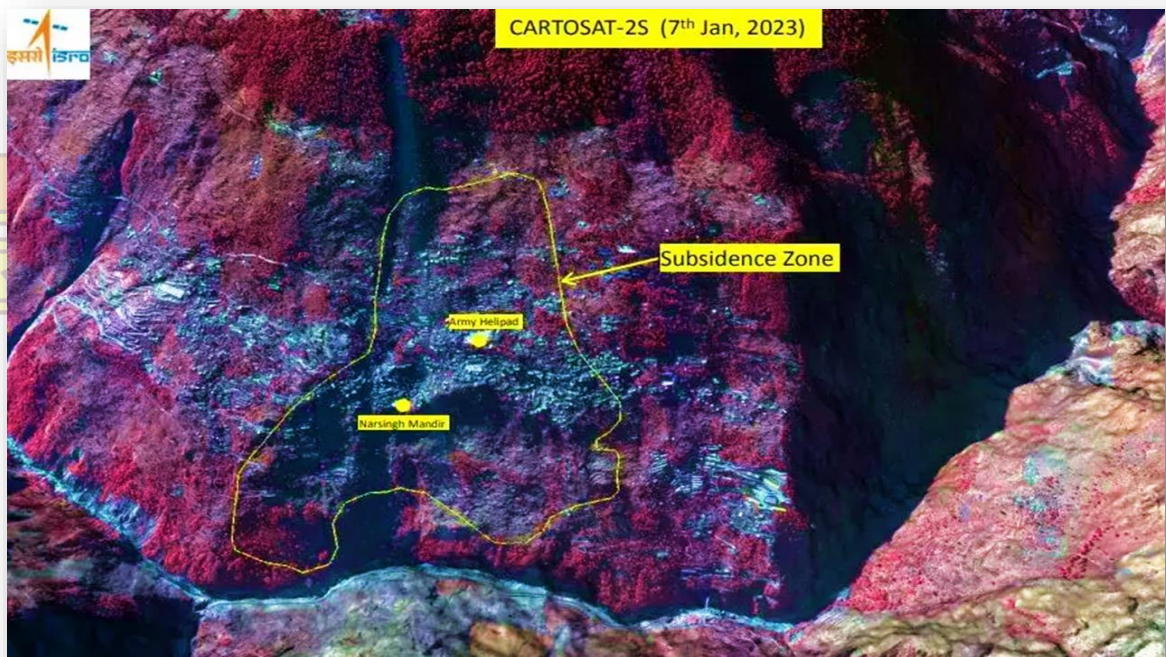
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Joshimath Land Subsidence

Why In The News?

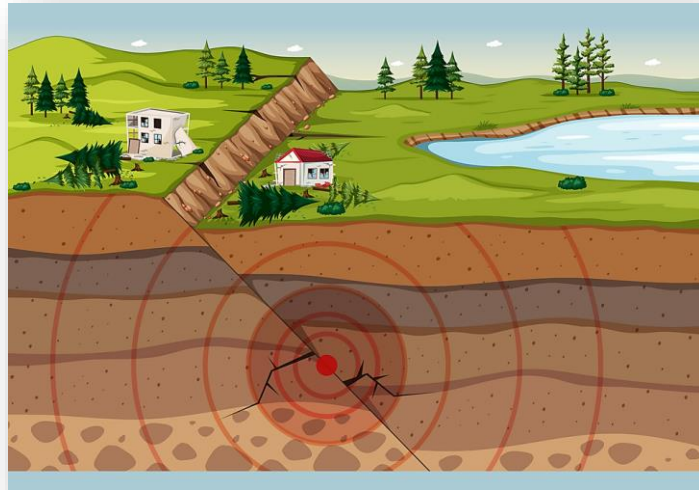
- Recently **Uttarakhand's Joshimath** Experienced An Enormous **Landslide** Incidence Leading To The **Development Of Various Cracks**. This Area Saw A **Rapid Sinking** Of 5.4 Cm In Just 12 Days, According To A Report By **ISRO**.
- **Satellite Images** Released By **ISRO's National Remote Sensing Centre** Show The Town Sank 5.4 Cm Between December 27 And January 8. The Report, Quoting Witnesses, Said The **Massive Soil Sinking** Occurred Due To "**A Rapid Subsidence Event That Was Triggered On January 2, 2023.**"



What Is Land Subsidence?

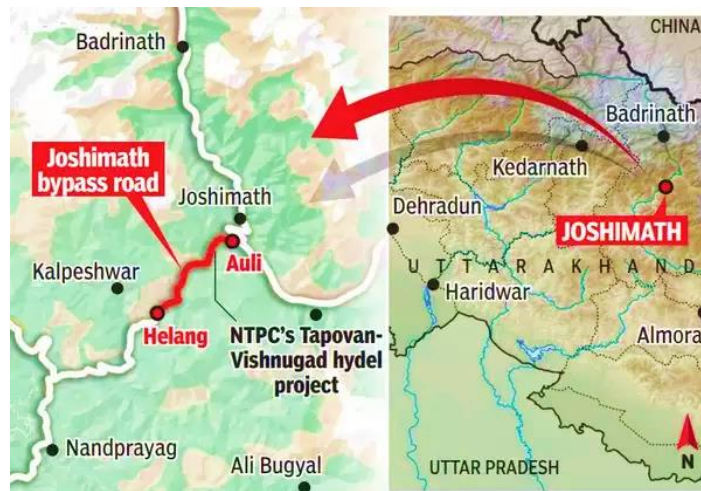
- **Land Subsidence** Is The **Sinking Of The Ground** Because Of **Underground Material Movement**. It Can Be Caused By **Gradual Settling Or Sudden Sinking** Of The Earth's Surface.
- The Causes For Subsidence Generally Are:
- **Natural Causes** - Earthquakes, Soil Compaction, Erosion, Glacial Adjustment, Sinkhole Formation, Etc.

- **Resource Extraction** - Extracting Resources Such As Oil, Water, Minerals, Natural Gas, Etc. From The Ground By Mining, Fracking, Or Pumping.
- **Construction Of Infrastructure** - Excess Infrastructure Load Above The Carrying Capacity Of The Soil.



Where Is Joshimath Located?

- Joshimath Is A Hilly Town Located On The **Rishikesh-Badrinath National Highway (NH-7)** In The **Chamoli District** Of Uttarakhand. The City Serves As A **Tourist Town** As It Acts As An Overnight Rest Stop For People Visiting **Badrinath, Auli, Valley Of Flowers, Hemkund Sahib** Etc.
- It Is Also Of Great Strategic Importance And Is Home To One Of The **Army's Most Important Cantonments**. It Is Home To One Of The **Four Maths (Monasteries)** Established By **Adi Shankara** - **Sringeri In Karnataka, Dwarka In Gujarat, Puri In Odisha, And Joshimath Near Badrinath In Uttarakhand**.



Reasons For Joshimath Crisis

- According To Experts, **Joshimath City Has Been Built On An Ancient Landslide Material** - Meaning It Rests On A Deposit Of Sand And Stone, Not Rock, Which **Doesn't Have High Load-Bearing Capacity**. This Makes The Area Extremely Vulnerable To Ever-Burgeoning Infrastructure And Population.
- Moreover, The **Lack Of A Proper Drainage System** Might Have Also Contributed To The Sinking Of The Area. Experts Say That **Unplanned And Unauthorized Construction** Has Led To The **Blocking Of The Natural Flow Of Water**, Which Eventually Results In Frequent Landslides.
- Residents Have Also Blamed **NTPC's Tapovan Vishnugad Hydro Power Project** For The Incident. They Allege That **The Tunnel Had Water Seepage** "From A Punctured Aquifer, Leading To The Drying Of Water Sources In Joshimath." Experts Suggest That It Could Be One Of The Reasons For The Collapse.
- However, **NTPC Denied The Allegations** And In A Statement Said, "The Tunnel Built By NTPC **Does Not Pass Under Joshimath Town**. This Tunnel Is Dug By A Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) And No Blasting Is Being Carried Out Presently".



Earlier Warnings Regarding The Fragility Of Area

- The Possibility Of Such An Incident Happening In The Region Was First Highlighted Around 50 Years When The **MC Mishra Committee Report (1976)** Was Published And It Cautioned Against **"Unplanned Development In This Area And Identified The Natural Vulnerabilities."**
- The **1991 And 1999 Earthquakes** Proved That The Area Is Susceptible To Earthquakes. The Town Fall In **High-Risk Seismic Zone-V** And Is **Traversed By Running Streams** With A High Gradient From Vishnuprayag, A Confluence Of The **Dhauliganga And The Alaknanda Rivers**.
- Scientists From The **Indian Institute Of Remote Sensing, Dehradun**, Observed That Joshimath And The Surrounding Areas Have Been Sinking At A **Rate Of 6.5 CM (2.5 Inches) Per Year** Based On Satellite Data From July 2020 To March 2022. Their Findings Correlate Well With The **Base Erosion Of The Joshimath Slope Along The Alaknanda River**.
- Cracks On Walls And Buildings Were **First Reported In 2021**, As The Chamoli District Of Uttarakhand Experienced **Frequent Landslides And Flooding**. As Per Reports, The Uttarakhand Government's Expert Panel In 2022 Found That **Several Pockets Of Joshimath Are "Sinking"** To Man-made And Natural Factors.



Impact Of The Joshimath Crisis

- At Least **66 Families Have Fled The Town While 678 Houses Have Reported Cracks**. A Government Official Said That **Over 4000 People Have Been Affected** So Far. **Uttarakhand CM Pushkar Singh Dhami**, Visited Joshimath And Held Meetings With Locals And Experts And **Announced ₹ 1.5 Lakh As Compensation** As A Temporary Measure But Still Working On Actual Compensation Rates.
- **Home Minister Amit Shah** Also Led A High-Level Meeting To Review The Situation With Union Ministers Nitin Gadkari, RK Singh, Bhupendra Yadav, And Senior Government Officials At His Home.



Way Ahead For Dealing With The Crisis

- Regulated Tourism Practice
- Vigilance And Patrolling
- Early Warning System
- Regional Cooperation
- Area-Specific Sustainable Plan
- Promote Ecotourism
- Sustainable Development In Fragile Himalayan Region

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. National Institute Of Disaster Management (NIDM) Is In

- A. Kolkata
- B. New Delhi
- C. Hyderabad
- D. Manipur

ANSWER: B

2. Common Factors Of Wildfire Hazards

- A. Volcanic Eruption
- B. El-Nino
- C. Volcanic Lightning And Thundering
- D. All The Above

ANSWER: D

3. International Day Of Natural Disaster Reduction

- A. June 15
- B. March 5
- C. October 13
- D. September 13

ANSWER: C

4. Head Of National Disaster Management Authority

- A. Home Minister
- B. Defence Minister
- C. Environment Minister
- D. Prime Minister

ANSWER: D

5. National Disaster Management Authority Was Established In

- A. 2003
- B. 2004
- C. 2005
- D. 2006

ANSWER: C



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