



# Vishnugad-Pipalkoti Hydro Electric Project (VPHEP)

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**News:** On December 30, 2025, a collision between two "loco-trolleys" (construction trains) inside the Pipalkoti tunnel in Chamoli, Uttarakhand, left 88 workers injured. A magisterial inquiry has been ordered.

## Key Details for UPSC:

- **Project Overview:** A 444 MW run-of-the-river project on the **Alaknanda River** in Chamoli district, Uttarakhand. It is being developed by **THDC India Ltd.**
- **Strategic Importance:** Part of India's push for renewable energy to meet the 500 GW non-fossil fuel target by 2030.
- **The Accident:** The collision involved local "loco-trolleys" used to transport muck and workers. Indian Railways clarified these were **not** standard trains but specialized project equipment.
- **Environmental & Safety Concerns:**
- **Geological Fragility:** The project is in the **Main Central Thrust (MCT)** zone, highly prone to seismic activity and landslides (Joshimath crisis context).
- **TBM (Tunnel Boring Machine) Risks:** The accident occurred at the TBM site, highlighting the industrial hazards of deep-mountain tunneling.
- **Mains Value-Add:** Use this to discuss the **trade-off between Himalayan infrastructure and ecological stability.**