Chota Char Dham & Bada Char Dham

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance*

Why in News?

In recent days, the committee heads of the 'Chota Char Dham' shrines in Uttarakhand have said that non-Hindus may soon be banned from entering the temple premises.

- **Chota Char Dham–** These are 4 highly sacred Hindu pilgrimage sites located in the Himalayan region of Uttarakhand namely, Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath, and Badrinath.
- The pilgrimage typically runs from April/May to October/November, and is undertaken at least once in a lifetime to attain salvation.
- The pilgrimage typically begins at Yamunotri and ends at Badrinath.
- **Yamunotri-** It is the source of the Yamuna River and is dedicated to Goddess Yamuna.
- It is located in the Uttarkashi district.
- **Gangotri -** It is the source of the river Ganga, dedicated to Goddess Ganga.
- It is located in the Uttarkashi district.
- **Kedarnath -** Located in Rudraprayag district, it is dedicated to Lord Shiva and is the highest Jyotirlinga.
- It is located in Garhwal Himalayas in the Rudraprayag district.
- **Badrinath -** Located in Chamoli district, it is dedicated to the 'Badri' incarnation of Lord Vishnu.
- It is located in Alaknanda Valley in the Chamoli district.

Bada Char Dham

- This "Great" circuit spans the 4 corners of India, representing the 4 cardinal directions and different Yugas (epochs).
- **Badrinath (North) -** Located in Uttarakhand; dedicated to **Lord Vishnu**.
- **Dwarka (West) -** Located in Gujarat; dedicated to **Lord Krishna**.
- **Puri (East) -** Located in Odisha; home to the Jagannath Temple dedicated

to **Lord Jagannath**.

- **Rameswaram (South) -** Located in Tamil Nadu; dedicated to **Lord Shiva**.

Reference

The Indian Express | ‘Chota Char Dham’ shrines