

**SMART MONEY** COPING  
WITH FALLING STOCKS

**DEFENCE** CHINESE THREAT  
IN INDIAN DRONES

**CINEMA** BOLLYWOOD  
LOOKS NORTHEAST

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# INDIA TODAY

**DELHI ASSEMBLY POLLS**

## FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL

AS THE BJP COMES OUT ALL GUNS BLAZING, **ARVIND KEJRIWAL** FINDS  
HIMSELF WITH HIS BACK TO THE WALL IN HIS BID FOR A FOURTH TERM

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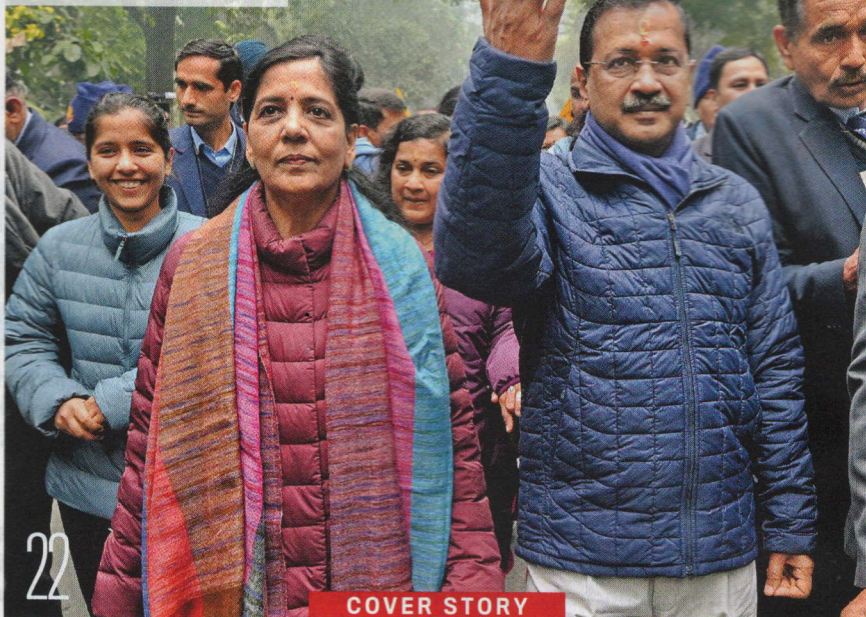
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ARUN KUMAR

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# UPFRONT

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UNIFORM CIVIL CODE/ UTTARAKHAND

## MAKING A BEGINNING

By Avaneesh Mishra

In the crisp mountain air of Uttarakhand, the unsettling sense of being on the frontier blends with a more rooted conviction in its status as a safehouse for ancient civilisational ideals. The two contraries got entwined on January 27, when Uttarakhand was taken to the very frontline of a contentious constitutional experiment—one that seeks nothing less than to legislate ways of living. Putting into active mode a proposed code drafted by the Pushkar Singh Dhami government, it became the first Indian state to implement a Uniform Civil Code (UCC). This legal step, which comes on the back of one of the most polarising debates in India's history, aims to standardise personal laws governing marriage, divorce, inheritance, live-in relationships and succession, cutting across religious lines.

As such, the law aligns seamlessly with the Directive Principles of State Policy listed in the Constitution and also the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party's larger political narrative of Hindutva and uniformity. But its practical and societal implications have always sparked considerable debate—while the government hails it as a tool for empowerment and gender equality, critics argue it infringes on personal freedoms and risks alienating certain communities.

The journey to the UCC began in 2022, when Dhami promised to implement it during his election campaign. The UCC of Uttarakhand Act was finally passed in February 2024. Its reformist provisions include equal property rights for sons and daughters, legitimacy for children born from live-in relationships, and equal grounds for divorce (see *Key Provisions of UCC*). Citizens with a

