



Research Unit
Press Information Bureau
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Prayagraj: Blending Tradition with Modernity

2025 Maha Kumbh Mela to Set New Global Standards for Spiritual Events

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The Kumbh Mela is the world's largest peaceful gathering, drawing millions of pilgrims for a ritual bath in holy rivers. This bath symbolises spiritual cleansing and renewal. It takes place four times every 12 years, rotating between Haridwar on the Ganges, Ujjain on the Shipra, Nashik on the Godavari, and Prayagraj, where the Ganges, Yamuna, and Sarasvati meet.



The Kumbh Mela is more than a spiritual gathering. It is a vibrant blend of cultures, traditions, and languages, showcasing a "mini-India" where millions come together without formal invitations. The event brings ascetics, sadhus, kalpavasis, and seekers from diverse backgrounds, embodying devotion, asceticism, and unity. Recognised by UNESCO in 2017 as an intangible cultural heritage, the Kumbh Mela holds immense historical and cultural value. Prayagraj will host this grand event again in 2025, from January 13 to February 26, offering a blend of rituals, culture, and astronomy.

Maha Kumbh Mela 2025: A New Era of Spirituality and Innovation

The Maha Kumbh Mela in 2025 promises a unique blend of spirituality, culture, and history in Prayagraj. From January 13 to February 26, pilgrims will not only engage in a series of spiritual rituals but also embark on an odyssey that transcends physical, cultural, and even spiritual boundaries. The city's vibrant streets, bustling markets, and local cuisine add a rich cultural layer to the experience. The Akhara camps provide an additional spiritual dimension, where sadhus and ascetics come together for discussions, meditation, and sharing wisdom. Together, these elements make the Maha Kumbh Mela 2025 an extraordinary celebration of faith, culture, and history, offering an enriching journey for all attendees.



The upcoming 2025 Maha Kumbh Mela is also poised to enhance the experience of devotees with advanced facilities and infrastructure, ensuring a seamless, safer, and more immersive journey for all participants. Improved sanitation systems, expanded transportation networks, and upgraded security measures are expected to provide a smoother, safer, and more enriching experience. Incorporating innovative solutions, the 2025 Maha Kumbh Mela is set to redefine global standards for hosting spiritual and cultural events of this magnitude.

Prayagraj: A Journey Through Time

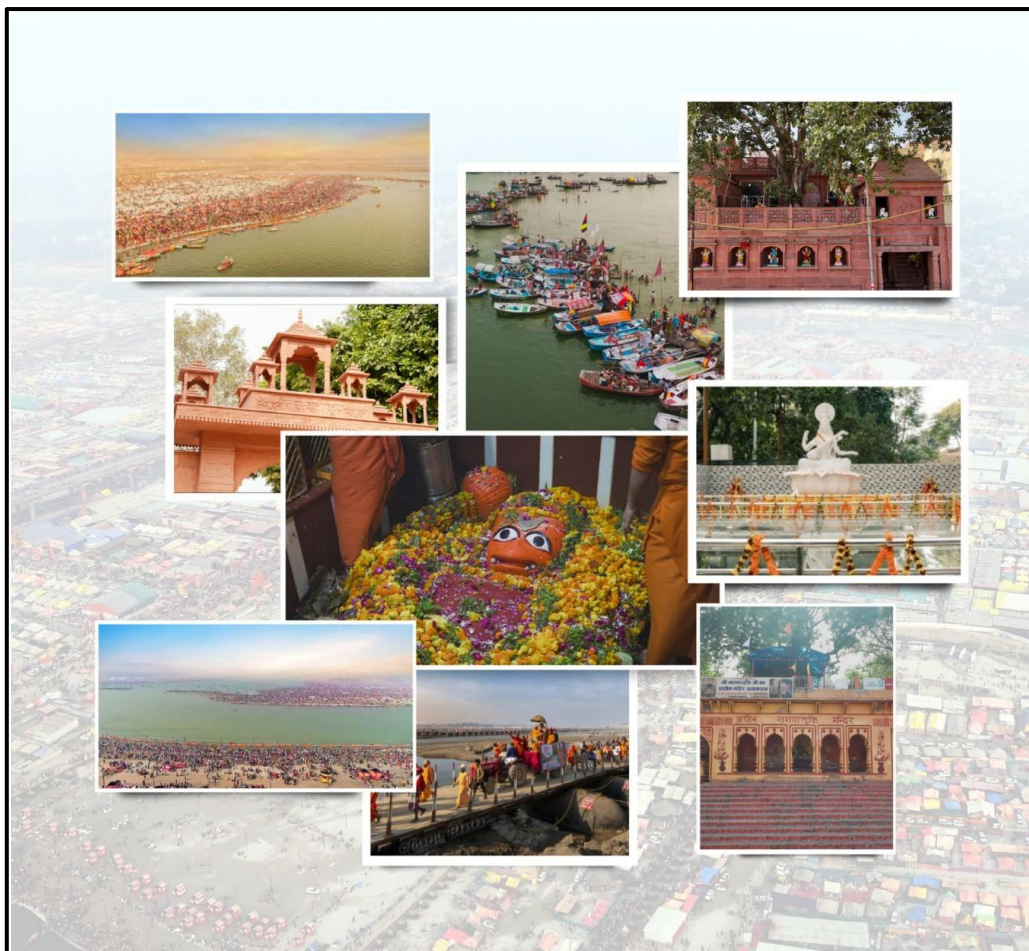
Prayagraj, with a rich history, dates back to 600 BC when the Vatsa kingdom thrived, and Kaushambi served as its capital. Gautama Buddha visited Kaushambi. Later, emperor Ashoka made it a provincial centre during the Mauryan era, marked by his monolithic pillars. Rulers like the Sungas, Kushans, and Guptas also left artefacts and inscriptions in the region.

In the 7th century, Chinese traveller Huiyen Tsang described Prayagraj as a "great city of idolaters," reflecting its strong Brahminical traditions. Its importance grew under Sher Shah, who built the

Grand Trunk Road through the area. In the 16th century, Akbar renamed it 'Ilahabas,' turning it into a fortified imperial centre and key pilgrimage site, setting the stage for its modern relevance.

Key Landmarks and Spiritual Sites of Prayagraj

Triveni Sangam is where the Ganga, Yamuna, and the mystical Saraswati meet. The Saraswati, unseen, is believed to appear during the Kumbh Mela, symbolising knowledge and wisdom. Devotees visit to cleanse their sins, making it the heart of the Kumbh Mela, a grand celebration of India's cultural heritage.



Pilgrims visiting Triveni Sangam also explore many revered temples in Prayagraj. The **Shri Lete Hue Hanuman Ji Temple** in Daraganj, established by Saint Samarth Guru Ramdasji, features idols of Shiva-Parvati, Ganesh, Bhairav, Durga, Kali, and Navgrah. Nearby, the Shri Ram-Janki and Harit Madhava temples add to the spiritual atmosphere. **The Alop Shankari Temple**, dedicated to Shri Alopshankari Devi, and the Nagvasuki Temple, honouring the serpent deity, are also popular, with the latter being restored for the Maha Kumbh Mela 2025.

The Shankar Viman Mandapam, a 130-foot-high South Indian-style temple, houses idols of Adi Shankaracharya, Kamakshi Devi, and Tirupati Balaji. **The Shri Veni Madhav Temple**, the most important of Prayagraj's twelve Madhava temples, is essential for completing the Prayag pilgrimage. **The Akshayvat Tree and Patalpuri Temple** near Allahabad Fort hold deep

mythological significance, with the Akshayvat being a sacred fig tree mentioned in Hindu texts. Other notable temples include the **Mankameshwar Temple**, **Dashashwamedha Temple**, and **Takshakeshwar Nath Temple**. The **Saraswati Koop** is being refurbished for the Maha Kumbh Mela 2025 to preserve its historical and cultural value. The evening **Ganga Aarti at Ram Ghat** is a captivating ritual honouring the river goddess, performed daily with chants, lamps, and devotion, symbolising the five elements of nature.

Prayagraj is also home to **Allahabad University**, India's fourth-oldest university, established on September 23, 1887. Its origins trace back to Muir Central College, founded by Sir William Muir on December 9, 1873. **The Public Library of Prayagraj**, set up in 1864 and relocated to its current building in 1878, houses rare manuscripts and books. It also hosted the first Legislative Council meeting of the state in 1887, adding to its historical importance.

Milestones of Kumbh Mela 2019: A Landmark Event

The Kumbh Mela 2019 in Prayagraj was a historic event, drawing 24 crore pilgrims. It earned global praise for its organisation. Leaders from 182 countries, including 70 Heads of Missions and 3,200 Pravasi Bharatiya participants, applauded the arrangements. The event set three Guinness World Records: the largest bus parade, the biggest public painting drive under the "Paint My City" campaign, and the largest sanitation system.



Spread across 3,200 hectares near the Sangam, the Mela created the world's largest temporary city with meticulous planning. Extensive beautification efforts included planting 2 lakh plants, building thematic gates, and improving roads within a 10 km radius of Prayagraj. Security was strengthened with over 1,000 cameras, 62 police outposts, and ration systems for 10 lakh Kalpavasis. Overall, Kumbh Mela 2019 seamlessly integrated tradition with modernity, showcasing Prayagraj as a model of large-scale event management.

Conclusion

The Maha Kumbh Mela in 2025 promises to be a landmark event, building upon the success of previous editions while embracing innovative advancements. Prayagraj's rich historical, cultural, and spiritual fabric, combined with state-of-the-art facilities, will offer pilgrims an unparalleled experience of faith, unity, and devotion. The event's meticulous planning and the integration of modern technology with tradition will elevate the Kumbh Mela to new heights, setting a global benchmark for hosting large-scale spiritual and cultural gatherings. As millions gather once again at the Sangam, the 2025 Maha Kumbh Mela will continue to be a powerful symbol of India's enduring spiritual heritage and its commitment to celebrating diversity and harmony.

References

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