

SPOTLIGHT MAHAKUMBH 2025

Amid build-up, past data indicates Mahakumbh to be a money spinner

The fair will be the hub of a wide range of economic activities and is likely to witness significant revenue inputs

Kenneth John

kenneth.john@hindustantimes.com

MAHAKUMBH NAGAR (PRAYAGRAJ): As the grandeur and scale of the Mahakumbh increases with the Uttar Pradesh government claiming that the religious fair is expected to draw an estimated 40 crore (400 million) pilgrims and visitors, past data and experts' estimates indicate that the mega event will be a big money churner.

On the lines of big-ticket events like elections and multi-national sports championships, the Mahakumbh is all set to be a hub of economic activity creating jobs and generating revenue, according to experts and those who have observed the fair closely in the past. The mega event will begin on January 13 and conclude on February 26.

The last Mahakumbh held in 2013 generated a total revenue of around Rs 12,000 crore while the Kumbh Mela 2019 churned out overall revenue of Rs 12 lakh crore, according to a study by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). Economic activities associated with the Kumbh generated employment for over 6 lakh



A luxury cottage with dome shaped relaxing area having a price range of Rs 90,000 per day on normal days besides Rs 1.10 lakh per day on main bathing days of mela in Mahakumbh Nagar.

workers in 2019 across various sectors.

This time, estimates of the revenue potential of the Mahakumbh-2025 vary with experts putting the figure between Rs 1.5 lakh crore and Rs 2 lakh crore. The event has already seen heavy infrastructural investment. The services and supplies on offer would range from basic devotee management to hotels, transport, food grains to helicopters and AI-based services.

During his Prayagraj visit on December 13, 2024, Prime Minister Narendra Modi mentioned the economic aspect of the fair: "Kumbh not only gives social strength but also provides economic empowerment of the people."

Just the basic items of daily need required by devotees during Mahakumbh 2025 would be around Rs 17,330 crore or above, as per turnover estimates prepared by the U.P. Chapter of Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT).

According to president of the U.P. Chapter of Confederation of All India Traders, Mahendra Kumar Goyal, the business volume of puja items alone is expected to be around Rs 2000 crore while the flower trade at the 45-day mela would be an estimated Rs 800 crore.

According to these estimates by U.P. Chapter of CAIT, the business volume of other items during the fair include groceries (wheat flour, sugar, tea, spices)

tourism, medical, FMCG, etc," he said.

EARNINGS FOR ALL The Mahakumbh 2025 would provide earnings to all, right from a milkman to a company giving a helicopter on hire. Uttar Pradesh industrial development minister Nand Gopal Gupta Naundi has estimated that Prayagraj will earn over Rs 2 lakh crore revenue from the Mahakumbh 2025.

HELICOPTER SERVICE This time, there would be a helicopter service for taking a tour of the Mahakumbh area. Revenue will be generated through tenders from interested agencies.

The helicopter service alone would earn Rs 35 crore per day on an average catering to 7000 pilgrims over a span of 45 days at a rate of Rs 5000 per trip for each pilgrim. The helicopter service would earn over Rs 157 crore in 45 days.

EXPERTS SPEAK Director of Govind Ballabh Pant Social Science Institute (GPPSSI), Prayagraj, Prof. Badri Narayan said the Mahakumbh-2025 has a thriving economy wherein retailers providing articles of daily use like blankets, woollen clothing, vermilion, etc. are expected to cater to the visitors.

Other sectors connected with the hotel industry, including food and travel, would also get a slice of the revenue. Homestays, luxury tent cities, cottages to super luxurious Dome City in Arai have been prepared. For these, rates ranging between Rs 7000 and Rs 110 lakh per day have been fixed.

The Mahakumbh-2025 is a huge world level event where revenue generation in the hotel industry separately could not be calculated, said Uttar Pradesh Hotel and Restaurants Association general secretary Garish Oberoi.

"It's an inter-connected exercise where tourists would not just put up in hotel rooms, but avail services of several other different sectors too, be it food,

earth, can only be estimated and not calculated to precision.

"Be it the boatmen, the garden sellers, coconut, incense sticks, diyas to luxury accommodations, the range is mind-boggling and any attempt to calculate would be unrealistic. Roughly the turnover can be said to be over Rs 2 lakh crore," he added. Mahakumbh Nagar district magistrate Vijay Kiran Anand said, "Certainly, income will be received during Mahakumbh. It is difficult to estimate the actual amount of income, but the expenditure of the domestic and foreign tourists coming will generate more income than expected."

GST REVENUE All government departments have been instructed by the administration to ensure that GST should be paid for whatever work is done. In this way, the government coffers would also receive phenomenal inputs in the form of taxes paid on purchases.

INVESTMENT THROUGH INFRASTRUCTURE Heavy investments have been made in developing the infrastructure and beautification of Prayagraj ahead of Mahakumbh-2025 to the tune of around Rs 7000 crore, including construction of 14 R01s (road overbridges) and R11s, 61 roads, beautification of 40 intersections and railway line expansion.

INCREASED BUDGETARY ALLOCATIONS Chief minister Yogi Adityanath had said the Mahakumbh-2025 would give a major push to state's economy. In the 2024-25 state budget, Rs 2,500 crore was allocated for organising the Mahakumbh. The amount was Rs 2,500 in the 2023-24 budget and Rs 62.55 crore for the financial year 2022-23.

The Centre has approved a special grant of Rs 2100 crore for the Mahakumbh. The U.P. government had allocated Rs 4,200 crore for the 2019 Kumbh Mela while the previous state government had spent around Rs 1,300 crore for organising the Mahakumbh in 2011.

BOATMEN The Prayagraj Navik Sangh has around 6000 registered boatmen. Recently, the boating charges of Rs 60 per person were hiked to Rs 90 as against the demand of boatmen to double the rates. Lalit Lal Nishad, president of the Prayagraj Navik Sangh, said every boatman earns between Rs 800 and Rs 1000 every day during the fair.

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Seers taking part in the Chhavi Pravesh procession of Anand Akhara on Monday.

Seers of Anand Akhara enter mela area

MAHAKUMBH NAGAR (PRAYAGRAJ): Seers of Shaiv tradition's Shri Tapendri Anand Akhara entered the Mela area with a majestic procession led by Naga Sanyasis, Acharyas, Mandaleshwars, and Mahamandaleshwars, riding elephants, horses, chariots, and camels on Monday. As part of the ceremonial entry, the city and mela administration welcomed the saints with garlands and floral showers.

A guardian of Sanatan Dharma and cultural heritage, Shri Tapendri Anand Akhara's Chhavi Pravesh commenced with grandeur. The procession began from Haghambhari Gaddi, passing through Labor crossing and Mata Road, before reaching Akaji Devi crossing. It then proceeded from Dashashwamedhi Ghat in Daraganj and entered the sacred Sangam area.

In the grand procession of Shri Tapendri Anand Akhara, the 'Udharn Dhwaja' led the way. Following closely behind, the Naga Sanyasis, revered as protectors of Sanatan Dharma,

marched with spears, lances, and swords in hand, carrying the idol of Ishadev, Lord Surya.

The chanting of Lord Surya's name echoed throughout, while the Acharya, Mandaleshwar, and Mahamandaleshwar of the Akhara, riding majestically on chariots, elephants, and horses, added to the splendour of the commencement procession.

During the procession to the camp, under the guidance of Akhara president Shankaranand Giri and Acharya Mahamandaleshwar Balkaranand Giri, Mahamandaleshwar Surendranand Giri, Secretary Kalu Giri Maharaj from Bareilly, along with Jeevale Mahamandaleshwar Sadhvi Manju, Shri Ji, and other saints and ascetics, entered the mela area.

The entry of Shri Tapendri Anand Akhara marked the final procession in the sequence of the Naga Sanyasis' entry for Mahakumbh. Next in line, as per tradition and scheduled dates, are the Vaishnav Bairagi Akhara, Uddasi Akhara, and Nirmal Akhara, etc.

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Rajbhar in Sikkim. UP cabinet minister Om Prakash Rajbhar and MoS (Independent charge) JPS Rathore held a Mahakumbh-2025 roadshow in Sikkim's capital Gangtok on Monday and invited the people of Sikkim to the event.

MAHAKUMBH WEBSITE RECORDS OVER 33L VISITORS FROM 183 NATIONS. The official website of Mahakumbh-2025, https://kumbh.gov.in, has become a go-to source for reliable information, attracting significant global traffic.

FORCES FROM OVER 70 DISTRICTS. MAHAKUMBH NAGAR: Over 70 districts have deployed forces to ensure the safety of devotees during Mahakumbh. Among them, 15,000 civil police personnel will vigilantly monitor every corner of the district.

NDRF TEAM SAVES NINE PEOPLE FROM DROWNING. MAHAKUMBH NAGAR (PRAYAGRAJ): Nine members of a family were saved by a team of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) at Arai Ghat on Monday.

'JAL SAHELIS' TO LEAD WATER CONSERVATION DIALOGUE. MAHAKUMBH NAGAR (PRAYAGRAJ): The Jal Sahelis of Bundelkhand will showcase their success stories at Mahakumbh.

AIRTEL TO BOOST CONNECTIVITY. LUCKNOW: Airtel has enhanced network coverage in Prayagraj ahead of the Mela by installing 287 new sites.