

# History of Allahabad

[Allahabad](#) is one of the largest cities of the State of [Uttar Pradesh](#) in [India](#). It encompasses a large area and is an inland peninsula surrounded by the rivers [Ganga](#) and [Yamuna](#) from three sides with only one side connected to the mainland. Along with a large number of areas within Allahabad City, there are several satellite cities on the other side of the rivers [Ganga](#) and [Yamuna](#), and are considered as satellite cities of Allahabad. There are also a large number of Townships and Villages near Allahabad City within [Allahabad District](#).

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## **[[edit](#)] History of Allahabad**

[Allahabad](#) or Prayagraj is a historian's paradise. History lies embedded everywhere, in its fields, forests and settlements. Forty-eight kilometres, towards the southwest, on the placid banks of the Jamuna, the ruins of Kaushambi, capital of the Vatsa kingdom and a thriving center of Buddhism, bear silent testimony to a forgotten and bygone era. On the eastern side, across the river Ganga and connected to the city by the Shastri Bridge is [Jhunsi](#), identified with the ancient city of Pratisthanpur, capital of the Chandra dynasty. About 58 kilometres northwest is the medieval site of Kara with its impressive wreckage of Jayachand's fort. Sringeripur, another ancient site discovered relatively recently, has become a major attraction for tourists and antiquarians alike.

Prayag is an extremely important and integral part of the Ganga Yamuna Doab, and its history is inherently tied with that of the Doab region, right from the inception of the town.

The city was known earlier as Prayāga - a name that is still commonly used. That it is an ancient town, is illustrated by supposed references in the Vedas to Prayag, where Brahma, the Hindu Creator of the Universe, is believed to have attended a sacrificial ritual. Excavations have revealed Northern Black Polished ware objects in Prayag, further corroborating the conjecture that Prayag existed as a town as early as 600 B.C.

The Puranas record that [Yayati](#) left [Prayag](#) and conquered the region of Saptha Sindhu.<sup>[1]</sup> His five sons [Yadu](#), [Druhyu](#), [Puru](#), [Anu](#) and [Turvashu](#) became the main tribes of the Rigveda.

When the [Aryans](#) first settled in what they termed the [Aryavarta](#), or [Madhyadesha](#), Prayag or Kaushambi was an important part of their territory. The [Vatsa](#) (a branch of the early [Indo-Aryans](#)) were rulers of [Hastinapur](#) (near present day [Delhi](#)), and they established the town of [Kaushambi](#) near present day Prayag. They shifted their capital to Kaushambi when Hastinapur was destroyed by floods.

In the times of the [Ramayana](#), Prayag was made up of a few [rishis'](#) huts at the confluence of the sacred rivers, and much of the vats country was continuous [jungle](#). [Lord Rama](#), the main protagonist in the [Ramayana](#), spent some time here, at the [Ashram](#) of [Sage Bharadwaj](#), before proceeding to nearby [Chitrakoot](#).

The Doaba region, including Prayag was controlled by several empires and dynasties in the ages to come. It became a part of the Mauryan and Gupta empires of the east and the Kushan empire of the west before becoming part of the local Kannauj empire which became very powerful.

Objects unearthed in Prayag indicate that it was part of the Kushana empire in the 1st century AD. In his memoirs on India, Huien Tsang, the Chinese chronicler who travelled through India during Harshavardhana's reign (A.D. 607-647), writes that he visited Prayag in A.D. 643.

When the Muslim rule came, Prayag became a part of the Delhi Sultanate when the town was annexed by Mhd Ghori in A.D. 1193. Then the Mughals took over from the slave rulers of Delhi and under them Prayag rose to prominence once again.

Acknowledging the strategic position of Prayag in the Doaba or the "Hindustan" region, at the confluence of its defining rivers which had immense navigational potentials, [Akbar](#) built a magnificent fort – one of his largest – on the banks of the holy [Sangam](#) and re-christened the town as Allahabad in 1575. The Akbar fort has an Ashokan pillar and some temples, and is largely a military barracks. On the southwestern extremity of Allahabad lies [Khusrobagh](#); it has three mausoleums, including that of Jehangir's first wife – Shah Begum.

It was from Allahabad that Prince Salim, later to become emperor Jehangir, revolted against his father, the Mughal emperor Akbar. In 1602, prince Salim held a parallel imperial court in Akbar's fort here, ignoring the royal summons to leave Allahabad and proceed to Agra. However, before his death in 1605, Akbar named Salim his successor.

Before colonial rule was imposed over Allahabad, the city was rocked by Maratha incursions. But the Marathas also left behind two beautiful eighteenth century temples with intricate architecture.

In [1765](#), the combined forces of the [Nawab of Awadh](#) and the Mughal emperor [Shah Alam II](#) lost the [Battle of Buxar](#) to the British. Although, the British did not take over their states, they established a garrison at the Prayag fort - realising its strategic position as the gateway to the north west. Governor General Warren Hastings later took Allahabad from Shah Alam and gave it to Awadh alleging that he had placed himself in the power of the Marathas.

In [1801](#) the [Nawab](#) of [Awadh](#) ceded the city to the [British East India Company](#). Gradually the other parts of Doaba and adjoining region in its west (including Delhi and Ajmer-Mewara regions) were won by the British. When these north western areas were made into a new Presidency called the "North Western Provinces of Agra", its capital was Agra. Allahabad remained an important part of this state.

In [1834](#), Allahabad became the seat of the Government of the Agra Province and a High Court was established. But a year later both were relocated to Agra.

In [1857](#), Allahabad was active in the [Indian Mutiny](#). After the mutiny, the British truncated the Delhi region of the state, merging it with Punjab and transferred the capital of North west Provinces to Allahabad, which remained so for the next 20 years.

In [1877](#) the two provinces of Agra (NWPA) and Awadh were merged to form a new state which was called the [United Provinces](#). Allahabad was the capital of this new state till the 1920s.

## **[\[edit\]](#) An ancient seat of learning**

It was a well-known centre of education (dating from the time of the [Buddha](#)), and in the first few decades of the 20th century. Allahabad University was established on 23 September 1887. It is the fourth oldest university of India after Calcutta, Bombay and Madras University. In the 19th century, the [Allahabad University](#) earned the epithet of 'Oxford of the East'. Its jurisdiction at the time extended over a large part of north and north west India (today's U.P, Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan and M.P.). Between 1887 and 1927 at least thirty-eight different institutions and colleges of this area were affiliated to Allahabad University. Allahabad University is also a major literary centre for [Hindi](#).

It also holds the world record for the world's first letter delivered by airmail (from Prayag to [Naini](#), just a few km. across the river [Yamuna](#)) (1911).

## **[\[edit\]](#) Allahabad, the freedom struggle, and Indian politics**

During the Mutiny of 1857, Allahabad had an insignificant presence of European troops. Taking advantage of this, the rebels brought Allahabad under their control. It was around this time that Maulvi Liaquat Ali unfurled the banner of revolt. Maulvi Liaquat Ali was the forerunner amongst the freedom fighters of 1857.

After the Mutiny was quelled, the British established the High Court, the Police Headquarters and the Public Service Commission in the city. This transformed Allahabad into an administrative center, a status that it enjoys even today.

The fourth session of the [Indian National Congress](#) was held in the city in [1888](#). At the turn of the century, Allahabad also became a nodal point for the revolutionaries. The Karmyogi office of Sundar Lal in Chowk sparked patriotism in the hearts of many young men. Nityanand Chatterji became a household name when he hurled the first bomb at the European club. It was at Alfred Park in Allahabad where, in 1931, the revolutionary [Chandrashekhar Azad](#) killed himself when surrounded by the [British Police](#). The Nehru family homes [Anand Bhavan](#) and Swaraj Bhavan were at the center of the political activities of the Indian National Congress. In the years of the freedom struggle, thousands of satyagrahis, led, inter alia, by [Purshottam Das Tandon](#), [Bishambhar Nath Pande](#) and [Narayan Dutt Tewari](#), went to jail. And when freedom was finally won, the first Prime Minister of free India, Jawahar Lal Nehru, and several Union ministers such as Mangla Prasad, Muzaffar Hasan, K. N. Katju, Lal Bahadur Shastri, were from Allahabad.

Allahabad is the birthplace of [Jawaharlal Nehru](#), and the Nehru family estate, called the [Anand Bhavan](#), is now a museum. It is also the birthplace of [Indira Gandhi](#), and the home of [Lal Bahadur Shastri](#), both later [Prime Ministers of India](#). Besides, [Vishwanath Pratap Singh](#) and [Chandra Shekhar](#) were also associated with Allahabad. Thus, Allahabad has the distinction of being the home of several [Prime Ministers](#) in India's post-independence history.

The first seeds of the idea of [Pakistan](#) were sown in Allahabad. On [29 December 1930](#), [Allama Muhammad Iqbal](#)'s presidential address to the All-India [Muslim League](#) proposed a separate [Muslim](#) state for the Muslim majority regions of India.

## **[[edit](#)] Literary past**

Allahabad is famous for the literary geniuses it has produced. Most of the famous writers in Hindi literature had a connection with the city. Notable amongst them were [Mahadevi Varma](#), [Sumitranandan Pant](#), [Suryakant Tripathi 'Nirala'](#), [Upendra Nath 'Ashk'](#) and [Harivansh Rai Bachchan](#). Another noteworthy poet was [Raghupati Sahay](#) who was more famous by the name of [Firaq Gorakhpuri](#). Firaq was an outstanding literary critic and one of major Urdu poets of the last century. Both Firaq and Bachchan were professors of English at [Allahabad University](#). Firaq Gorakhpuri and Mahadevi Varma were awarded the [Jnanpith Award](#), the highest literary honour conferred in the [Republic of India](#) in 1969 and 1982 respectively. Rajendra Yadav, Mamta and Ravindra Kalia, Kamaleshwar, Doodhnath Singh and many other new age literary writers and critics like Namwar Singh have started their literary career from Allahabad. Allahabad is still home to many young and upcoming literary figures. Allahabad has also been one of the biggest centres of publication of Hindi literature for instance Lok Bharti, Rajkamal and Neelabh. Allahabad has also produced a great Lyricist Virag Mishra who most recently won the stardust award [\[1\]](#) for Standout Performance by a Lyricist - Virag Mishra (Zinda Hoon Main)

Urdu literature also has a great respect for this place. Akbar Allahabadi is the most famous Poet of the modern Urdu Literature. Apart from him poets like Nooh Narwi, Tegh Allahabadi, Raaz Allahabadi, Firaq gorakhpuri, Asghar Gondvi, and numerous others have brightened the name of Allahabad all over the world. Short story writers, Azam Kuraivi, Ibn e Safi, Adil Rasheed all are from Allahabad. Critics like Dr. Aijaz Husain, Dr. Aqeel Rizwi, Hakeem Asrar Kuraivi also hail from the Allahabad. In today context one of the biggest Urdu name is [Shamsur Rahman Faruqi](#) who edits [Shabkhood](#) from Allahabad which is known all over the Urdu world as a pioneer in Post Modernism Literature.

The famous English author and [Nobel](#) Laureate (1907) [Rudyard Kipling](#) also spent time at Allahabad working for *The Pioneer* as an assistant editor and overseas correspondent.

Eminent Sanskrit scholars like [Sir Ganganath Jha](#), Dr Baburam Saxena, Pandit Raghuvar Mitthulal Shastri and Professor Suresh Chandra Srivastava were both the student and the teacher in University of Allahabad. The most prominent Arabic and Persian Scholars that Allahabad ever had were Dr. Abdul Sattar Siddiqui, his colleague Muhammad Naemur Rehman and his student Professor Hindi. Professor Naemur Rehman was known for his extremely well organized personal library of tens of thousands of books which was open for all to benefit from. He was also known for his unconditional financial, material and intellectual help to any student.

Another major landmark of the literary past of Allahabad were the publishers "Kitabistan" owned by the Rehman brothers -- Kaleemur Rehman and Obaidur Rehman. They published thousands of books including those by Nehru and others. They became the first ever publishers from India to open a branch in London in 1936.



## Geography, demography and climate of Allahabad

[Allahabad](#) is one of the largest cities of the State of [Uttar Pradesh](#) in [India](#). It encompasses a large area and is an inland peninsula surrounded by the rivers [Ganga](#) and [Yamuna](#) from three sides with only one side connected to the mainland. Along with a large number of areas within Allahabad City, there are several satellite cities on the other side of the rivers [Ganga](#) and [Yamuna](#), and are considered as satellite cities of Allahabad. There are also a large number of Townships and Villages near Allahabad City Within [Allahabad District](#).

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### Geography



## Surroundings of Allahabad, India.

It is located in the southern part of the state, at [25°28'N, 81°50'E](#), and stands at the confluence of the Ganga ([Ganges](#)), and [Yamuna](#) rivers. The region was known in antiquity as the vats country. To its south west is the [Bundelkhand](#) region, to its east and south east is the [Baghelkhand](#) region, to its north and north east is the Awadh region and to its west is the (lower) doab of which it itself is a part.

Allahabad stands at a strategic point both geographically and culturally. An important part of the Ganga-Yamuna Doaba region, it is the last point of the Yamuna river and is the last frontier of the Indian west.

The land of the Allahabad district that falls between the Ganga and Yamuna is just like the rest of Doab --- fertile but not too moist, which is especially suitable for the cultivation of wheat. The non-doabi parts of the district (which were not originally a part of Allahabad but were added later) viz., the southern and eastern part of the district are somewhat similar to those of adjoining [Bundelkhand](#) and [Baghelkhand](#) regions, viz. dry and rocky.

The Indian GMT longitude that is associated with Jabalpur, also passes through Allahabad, which is 343 km north of Jabalpur on the same longitude.

## Reorganisation of Prayag

Allahabad division and the district was majorly reorganised a few years ago. The Etawah and Farrukhabad districts of the Allahabad division were merged with the Agra division, while Kanpur dehat was carved out from the Kanpur district and a separate Kanpur division was created.

Parts of the western areas of Allahabad were carved out to create a new district named Kaushambi. Now the new Allahabad division consists of Allahabad, Kaushambi, Pratapgarh and Fatehpur districts.

## Demography

Allahabad City has a population of 1,042,229 as per the 2001 census . It lists as the 32nd most populous city in India. Allahabad has an area of about 65 km<sup>2</sup> and is 98 m/340 ft

above sea level. Languages spoken in and around Allahabad include [Hindi](#), [English](#), [Urdu](#), and Allahabadi(local dialect).

The dialect of Hindi spoken in Allahabad is [Awadhi](#), although khari boli is most commonly used in the city area. All major [religions](#) are practised in Allahabad.

## Climate

Allahabad experiences all four seasons. The summer season is from April to June with the maximum temperatures ranging between 40 to 45 °C. [Monsoon](#) begins in early July and lasts till September. The winter season falls in the months of December, January and February. Temperatures in the cold weather could drop to freezing with maximum at almost 12 to 14 °C. Allahabad also witnesses severe fog in January resulting in massive traffic and travel delays. It does not snow in Allahabad.

Lowest temperature recorded −2 °C; highest, 48 °C. [\[1\]](#)

## Famous Personalities

- [Jawahar Lal Nehru](#), Former Prime Minister of India
- [Indira Gandhi](#), Former Prime Minister of India
- Pandit [Madan Mohan Malaviya](#), Founder, [Banaras Hindu University](#)
- [Upendra Nath 'Ashk'](#), Poet
- [Kalajaha](#), Hmar alljali
- [V. P. Singh](#), Former Prime Minister of India
- [Rajiv Gandhi](#), Former Prime Minister of India
- [Syed Abbas Husainy](#), Publisher
- [Harivansh Rai Bachchan](#), Poet
- [Dhyan Chand](#), Hockey player
- [Firaq Gorakhpuri](#), Poet
- [Mahadevi Varma](#), Poet
- [Munshi Premchand](#), Litterateur
- [Suryakant Tripathi Nirala](#), Poet
- [Dhananjaya Kumar](#), Yogacharya, Poet
- [Zameer Hassan Kazmi](#), Writer in English
- [Meghnad Saha](#), Scientist
- [Harish Chandra](#), Scientist
- [Allama Hakim Ahmad Hussain Al-Usmani](#), Founder, [Unani](#) Medical College, Allahabad
- [Hakim Ahmad Usmani](#), Shefa-ul-Mulk, Unani Physician
- [Hakim Hammad Usmani](#), Unani Physician and Philosopher
- [Hariprasad Chaurasia](#), Classical Musician

- [Nargis](#), Film actress
- [Amitabh Bachchan](#), Film Actor
- [Purushottam Das Tandon](#), Freedom Fighter
- [Ram Chandra Shukla](#), Artist
- [Mohammed Kaif](#), Cricketer
- [Badruddin Siddiqui](#), Freedom Fighter
- [Abdul Rasheed](#), Freedom Fighter
- [Madan Lal Khurana](#), Politician
- [Murlī Manohar Joshi](#), Former Union Human Resources Development Minister of India
- [Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna](#), Politician
- [Vivek Mushran](#), [Bollywood](#) Actor
- [Vikas Bhalla](#), Hindi Pop Singer
- [Shubha Mudgal](#), Singer
- [Makam Venkat Satya Bharat Gupta](#), Classical Singer
- [Dr. Kailash Nath Katju](#), Former Union Home Minister and Lawyer
- [Justice R. S. Pathak](#), Former Chief Justice of India and Judge at World Court
- [Justice V. N. Khare](#), Former Chief Justice of India
- [Abhinav Shyam Gupta](#), International Badminton Player
- [Professor Muhammad Naeemur Rehman](#), Department of Arabic & Persian, Allahabad University 1926 to 1950
- [Zahoor Qasim](#), Marine scientist
- [Vishal](#) ,Singer
- [Shamshur Rahman Faruqi](#), Urdu

[Allahabad](#) is a city in the state of [Uttar Pradesh,India](#).Historically it has been an important place of learning bringing people from other places to the city to gain education.[Allahabad University](#), built by the British and once called the Oxford of the East has always been famous for its intellectual atmosphere and for providing the best education to its students though for the past 2 decades it had declined a lot while Universities and Colleges in other parts of the country gained ground. But recently Allahabad University was declared a Central University(like it had once been previously) and this has given a boost to bringing back the past glory of this prestigious University.

## Schools

- [Maharishi Patanjali Vidya Mandir \(Teliargunj\)](#)
- [A.B Inter Collage \(Civil Lines\)](#)
- [S.K. Inter College \(Khatri Pathshala\)](#)
- [Bishop Johnson School & College, Allahabad \(BJS\)](#)
- [Boys' High School and College \(BHS\)](#)

- [Girls' High School and College \(GHS\)](#)
- [YMCA School and College \(YSC\)](#)
- [St. Mary's Convent Inter College \(SMC\)](#)
- [St. Anthony's Convent Inter College \(SAC\)](#)
- [St. Joseph's College, Allahabad \(SJC\)](#)
- [Bethany Convent School Naini](#)
- [Crosthwaite Girls School](#)
- [Government Intermediate College](#)
- [Mustafa Rasheed Shervani Inter College](#)
- [Yadgar-e-Husaini Intermediate College](#)
- [City A. V. Intermediate College](#)
- [Jumna Christian Inter College](#)
- [K.P. Inter College](#)
- [Sindhu Vidya Mandir](#)
- [Mary Lucas School & College \(MLS\)](#)
- [K V \(Air Force Station\) Bamrauli School](#) (KV AFS)
- [Tagore Public School](#)
- [Government Inter College \(G I C\)](#)
- [Colonelganj Intermediate College,\(CIC\)](#)
- [Maharishi Vidya Mandir Kalindipuram](#), (MVM Kalindipuram)
- [D.P. Girls Inter College](#)
- [Kendriya Vidyalaya Old Cantt](#), Teliarganj
- [Kendriya Vidyalaya New Cantt](#)
- [MLAP Inter College](#), Soraon
- [Holy Trinity School](#)
- [Bharat Scout & Higher Secondary School](#)
- [Jagat Taran Golen Jubilee School](#)

## Colleges and Universities of Allahabad

- [Allahabad Agricultural Institute](#)
- [Allahabad Degree College](#)
- [Allahabad University](#)
- [C.M.P. Degree College](#)
- [Ewing Christian College](#)
- [Govind Ballabh Pant Social Science Institute](#)
- [Hamidia Girls Degree College](#)
- [Harish Chandra Research Institute](#)
- [Institute of Engineering and Rural Technology \(IERT\)](#)
- [Indian Institute of Information Technology Allahabad \(IIIT-A\)](#)
- [Motilal Nehru Medical College](#)
- [Motilal Nehru National Institute of Technology \(MNNIT\)](#)

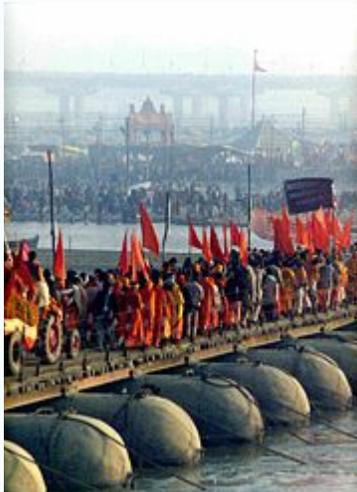
- [Motilal Nehru Institute of Research & Business Administration \(MONIRBA\)](#)
- [United College of Engineering & Research, Naini](#)
- [Jagat Taran Girls Degree College](#)
- [S.S.Khanna Girls Degree College](#)
- [Anglo Bengali Intermediate College](#)
- [Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Govt. Degree College, Phaphamau](#)
- [Shambhunath Institute Of Engineering & Technology \(SIET-A\)](#)
- [Northern Regional Institute of Printing Technology](#)
- [BBS College of Engineering & Technology, Phaphamau](#)

## Cultural Institutions of Allahabad

### Kumbh Mela



The 2001 Kumbh Mela.



Marching over the [Ganga](#) river



The largest religious gathering on Earth. [1][2] [3] Around 70 million people from around the world participated in the Kumbh Mela at the Holy city of [Prayag \(India\)](#) in [2001](#).

Philosophy and ethics relates closely to this subject. **Kumbh Mela** ([Devanagari](#): कूर्कभूभू कूर्कभू) is a [Hindu pilgrimage](#) that occurs four times every twelve years and rotates among four locations: [Prayag \(Allahabad\)](#), [Haridwar](#), [Ujjain](#) and [Nashik](#). Each twelve-year cycle includes one *Maha Kumbh Mela* (*Great Kumbh Mela*) at Prayag, which is attended by millions of people, making it the [largest gathering](#) anywhere in the world. It was actually started by King Harshvardhana of Ujjain. He used all his wealth to donate during this mela to poor, learned people of all religions. <sup>[[citations needed](#)]</sup>

After visiting the Kumbh mela of 1895, [Mark Twain](#) wrote:

"It is wonderful, the power of a faith like that, that can make multitudes upon multitudes of the old and weak and the young and frail enter without hesitation or complaint upon such incredible journeys and endure the resultant miseries without repining. It is done in love, or it is done in fear; I do not know which it is. No matter what the impulse is, the act born of it is beyond imagination marvelous to our kind of people, the cold whites."<sup>[1]</sup>

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## Astronomy and Kumbh Mela

The precise dates of the *Kumbh Mela* are astronomically determined, based upon precise calculations of the positions of the [Sun](#), the [Moon](#) and [Jupiter](#). At [Prayag](#), the *Maha Kumbh Mela* is held in the month of [Magha](#) (January/February in the [Gregorian calendar](#)). The highest spiritual merit is attached to bathing on the new moon day, [Amavasya](#), when Jupiter is in [Aquarius](#) (known in India as the Kumbh (the pot)) and both the Sun and Moon are in [Capricorn](#). At [Haridwar](#), the Kumbh Mela is held in the months of [Phalgun](#) and [Chaitra](#) (February/March/April), when the Sun passes to [Aries](#), the Moon is in [Sagittarius](#) and Jupiter is in [Aquarius](#). In [Ujjain](#), the festival is held in the month of [Vaishakha](#) (May), when other planets are in [Libra](#), the Sun and Moon are in Aries and Jupiter is in [Leo](#). At [Nashik](#), the Kumbh Mela takes place in the month of [Shravana](#) (July), when the Sun and Moon are in [Cancer](#) and Jupiter is in [Scorpio](#).

It is also said that the elixir of life is filled in a Kumbh (Pot) in Swarg (heaven) so with certain combination of Sun - Moon - Jupiter, the elixir falls from heaven to earth, and kumbh mela is held on those locations. The Kumbh mela held at Prayag (Allhabad) is the biggest religious gathering of the world.

## The legend

The observance of Kumbh Mela is based upon the following legend: Thousands of years ago, in the [Vedic period](#), gods and demons made a temporary agreement to work together churning [amrit](#) (the nectar of immortality) from the [Ksheera Sagara](#) (primordial ocean of milk), and to share the nectar equally. However, when the *Kumbh* (urn) containing the amrita appeared, the demons ran away with it and were chased by the gods. For twelve days and twelve nights (equivalent to twelve human years) the gods and demons fought in the sky for possession of this pot of amrita. It is said that during the battle, drops of amrita fell at four places: [Prayag](#), [Haridwar](#), [Ujjain](#) and [Nashik](#). Thus, the Kumbh Mela is observed at these four locations where the nectar fell.

## Rituals of Kumbh Mela



 The Triveni [Sangam](#), or the intersection of Yamuna River and [Ganges River](#), where devotees perform rituals.

Kumbh Mela is attended by millions of people on a single day. The major event of this festival is a ritual bath at the banks of the rivers in each town. Other activities include religious discussions, devotional singing, mass feeding of holy men and women and the poor, and religious assemblies where doctrines are debated and standardized. Kumbh Mela (especially the Maha Kumbh Mela) is the most sacred of all the Hindu pilgrimages. Thousands of holy men and women (monks, saints and [sadhus](#)) attend, and the auspiciousness of the festival is in part attributable to this.

## Recent Kumbh Melas

## 2003

When the Kumbh Mela was held in [Nashik, India](#), from [July 27](#) to [September 7, 2003](#), 39 pilgrims (28 women and 11 men) were trampled to death and 57 were injured (keeping in mind that the number of devotees attending the fair was around 70 million). Devotees had gathered on the banks of the [Godavari](#) river for the *maha snaan* or holy bath. Over 30,000 pilgrims were being held back by barricades in a narrow street leading to the [Ramkund](#), a holy spot, so the [sadhus](#) could take the first ceremonial bath. Reportedly, a sadhu threw some silver coins into the crowd and the subsequent scramble led to the stampede.<sup>[2]</sup>

## 2007

Every six years there is an Ardh or Half Mela at [Prayag](#) (also known as [Allahabad](#)). The actual dates are dependent on stellar constellations and were announced as below:

Important bathing dates

- 3 Jan (Poush Purnima)
- 14 Jan (Makar Sankranti)
- 19 Jan (Mauni Amavasya)
- 23 Jan (Basant Panchami)
- 2 Feb (Magh Purnima)

[low graphics version](#) | [feed](#)

Friday, 26 January, 2001, 10:00 GMT

### Kumbh Mela pictured from space



Zoom in: Masses of people move down to the waters

What is probably the largest human gathering in history has been imaged from space.

The Maha Kumbh Mela, or Grand Pitcher Festival, takes place every 12 years in Northern India and sees millions of devotees bathe in the Ganges to purify their sins. The Kumbh is

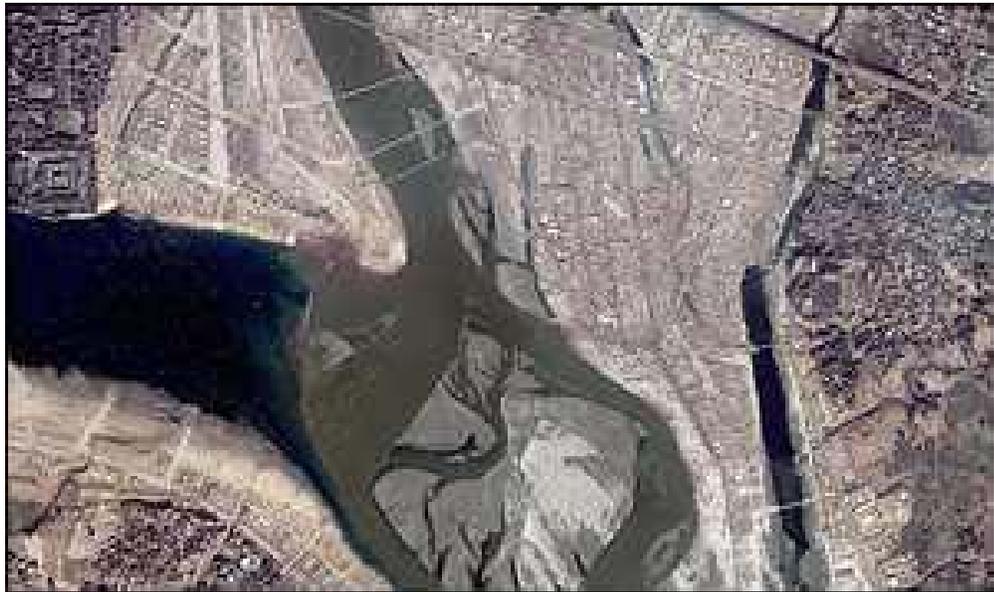
held at the confluence of the Ganges and Yamuna rivers, where Hindu scriptures say the gods spilt a drop of the elixir of immortality.

This extraordinary picture was taken by Space Imaging's Ikonos satellite on Tuesday this week. Timed at 1030 am, the image shows what was happening at the start of the most sacred and busiest bathing day (Mauni Amavasya) of the festival.

Vast numbers of people are moving down to the waters. Compare the less detailed version of the same image (below) with one taken before the event in May last year (also below). Notice how the shape of the sand banks in the river has changed.

The festival lasts just over a month. The authorities have spent millions of dollars on security and other arrangements with in excess of 30 million people expected to attend.

Ikonos is the world's highest-resolution, commercial Earth-imaging satellite. It orbits 680 kilometres (423 miles) above the planet.



Zoom out: The confluence of the Ganges and Yamuna rivers



