



# **MAHA KUMBH**

## **HINDU IDENTITY AT PLAY**

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## **Maha Kumbh: Hindu identity at play**

*Hindu centric Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and its inspired organizations anchored the largest human congregation of dharma and spiritualism.*

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## **Background and Context**

Prayagraj Maha Kumbh 2025 is more than just a religious gathering. It depicts gigantic convergence of glorious past, faith, civilization, spiritual journey and faith.

The world's extraordinary spiritual gathering with about 640 million devotees that include sadhus and philosophers reflects Bharat's civilizational continuity. Maha Kumbh, an event unmatched in scale is not only manifestation of religious devotion but a test of organizational strength, social togetherness and cultural assertiveness.

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and several organizations inspired by RSS played key role in shaping socio-cultural, organizational and ideological aspects of Kumbh. Though state has the basic responsibility to handle logistics, Sangh has managed to ensure smooth conduct of the event with its ground machinery, ideological reach and vast network of volunteers.

RSS contribution in the Maha Kumbh 2025 is not coincidental but display of selfless service, reflecting its long-term vision for Hindu resurgence, national integration and global cultural sovereignty.

RSS participation in Maha Kumbh is not limited to logistics alone. Instead, it is an effort that aligns with inclusive vision of rekindling Bharat's civilisational spirit.

Historically, Kumbh Melas have been flash points for Hindu society, serving as spiritual gathering and a platform for philosophical consolidation, social reforms and nationalist mobilisation. Kumbh also serves as a powerful means to strengthen Hindu unity, promote social harmony and counter narratives that seek to undermine indigenous heritage.

While the Indian state provides infrastructural support, RSS and its inspired organisations engage in four key areas of intervention at Maha Kumbh:

- 1. Seva (service) and volunteer management:** Mobilizing thousands of trained volunteers to manage crowd control, sanitation, healthcare and security.
- 2. Cultural and intellectual engagement:** Organizing discourses, seminars and interactions with religious leaders to strengthen a coherent vision of Hindu ideas.
- 3. Social cohesion and inclusion:** Ensuring that marginalised communities including Dalits, Adivasis and economically weaker sections find an active place in the Kumbh ecosystem.

**4. Positive narrative building:** Using Maha Kumbh as an opportunity to present ideas of Hindu civilization on the global stage and counter negative external narratives.

RSS and its inspired organizations have actively participated in Kumbh Melas and other essential cultural activities for decades. Whether it was the 1989 Kumbh that focused on social awakening and selfless service or the 2013 Maha Kumbh that saw more structured participation, with thousands of volunteers providing essential services and promoting a coherent Hindu cultural narrative. By 2019, RSS not only diversified its role but also coordinated with akharas, facilitated sanitation and medical aid, and ensured a decisive role in social upliftment.

Maha Kumbh 2025 represented a glorious chapter of RSS contribution, reflecting both its organisational strength and strategic foresight in integrating Hindu traditions with present-day socio-cultural and socio-political realities.

Maha Kumbh 2025 reflected the interconnectedness of faith, harmony and national rejuvenation, strengthening Sangh's conviction to Bharat's civilisational resurgence. Through its meticulous planning, grassroots mobilisation and intellectual engagement, RSS ensured that Maha Kumbh remained not just a periodic religious festival but became a defining moment in the reassertion of Hindu identity, national unity and global cultural influence.

With millions of devotees converged on the sacred banks of Prayagraj, RSS's initiatives at Maha Kumbh 2025 not only shaped the immediate success of the festival but also laid the groundwork for Bharat's long-term socio-cultural and geopolitical position as a leading civilisational power.

### **Grassroot Engagement**

How RSS used its organisational strength to facilitate the devotees and visitors and spread the spiritual and dharmic energy at the Maha Kumbh will serve as a case study for such events in the years to come. Let us know the efforts made by the Sangh:



## Selfless Service & Volunteer Mobilization



Hundreds of dedicated organizations, along with over one lakh volunteers, worked tirelessly throughout the Maha Kumbh, operating round the clock from day one till last day. Through their pandals and across the entire fairground, they reached out to those in need, selflessly distributing essential items and offering guidance. Furthermore, over five million meals were provided to devotees, ensuring that no one went hungry.

A few days before the commencement of Maha Kumbh, thousands of Sangh volunteers took responsibility for managing all entry points to the city, including Prayagraj railway station and bus stands. As millions of devotees came to take the sacred dip, these volunteers greeted them with warm smiles, inquired about their well-being, offered them refreshments, and guided them towards the ghats. Upon their return, these same volunteers not only organized free meals but also facilitated their transportation to railway stations, bus stands, and other exit points of the city. Their unwavering commitment to selfless service set an incredible example of devotion and hospitality.

Special attention was given to elderly devotees, with Sangh workers ensuring their convenience and comfort. Volunteers helped them in reaching the ghats on scooters, provided meals after their holy dip, and later escorted back to transportation hubs. Furthermore, Sangh played a pivotal role in reuniting devotees who had been separated from their families amidst the huge gathering of the Kumbh Mela. To streamline this endeavor, volunteers created a dedicated

WhatsApp group combining Sangh karyakartas from all over the country. Whenever a missing person was reported, their details and photographs were promptly shared in the group, enabling volunteers from relevant districts and cities to locate their families. Through this coordinated effort, thousands of lost individuals were successfully reunited with their loved ones.

Apart from all, RSS volunteers were at the forefront in streamlining the traffic system; for that, karyakartas had undergone special training, and in Mahakumbh, volunteers worked alongside law enforcement authorities to ensure that devotees do not face any inconvenience.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) had launched a nationwide campaign before the commencement of Maha Kumbh to collect reusable bags and plates which was called “One Plate, One Bag” campaign. The collected over 14,17,064 steel plates, 13,46,128 cloth bags from 7258 centres by 2241 inspired institutions and organisations were then distributed among devotees at Maha Kumbh. The initiative directly targets the rampant use of single-use plastics. A substantial reduction in plastic waste not only reduced environmental damage, but it also established a precedent for managing sustainability at global religious and cultural events. RSS's proactive strategy emphasised civil society's role in raising environmental awareness, supplementing government efforts to make India a greener place.



Beyond its immediate practical effects, the campaign's integration of sustainability into spiritual practice set an example for behavioral transformation. The campaign united environmental responsibility with cultural and religious awareness by urging

participants to embrace eco-friendly practices. Thousands of metric tons of waste are frequently produced during events like the Maha Kumbh, but their ecological impact may be greatly decreased by using smart solutions like reusable cutlery and biodegradable substitutes. The success of this project should encourage comparable sustainability approaches in future large-scale events across the globe, reaffirming that environmental stewardship is a civic responsibility rather than only a legal requirement.

Additionally, RSS volunteers took on the duty of keeping the Maha Kumbh Mela grounds clean. Trained Ganga Sevadoots strongly advised devotees to refrain from using plastic bags. They promoted an environmentally conscious approach by substituting a biodegradable wooden bag and plate for polythene whenever they saw a devotee carrying it. This effort to fight pollution was highly commended and made a substantial contribution to maintaining the Kumbh's sanctity.

In order to address important issues pertaining to cleanliness, water conservation, and the environment, a number of events were planned under the concept of "Harit Kumbh," or clean and green Kumbh. To create a strategic framework that would balance the five elements of nature while addressing related concerns, extensive discussions were conducted in conjunction with environmental specialists. Furthermore, the project aimed to raise awareness of sanitation programs and environmental sustainability among devotees attending the Mahakumbh. By highlighting the value of appropriate trash segregation and the usage of color-coded dustbins, street performers used Nukkad Natak (theatrical acts) to engage participants and encourage responsible waste disposal.

### **Health Initiatives**

Various projects, events and efforts were carried out by inspired groups connected to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh with the aim of ensuring that each devotee who visits the Maha Kumbh stays healthy and achieves spiritual serenity. These activities have had a significant and wide-ranging influence.

One of the most notable efforts, Netra Kumbh, was organized by Samdrushti Kshamata Vikas Evam Anusandhan Mandal (SAKSHAM). This endeavour seeks to restore and improve the vision of people, representing concept of Pashyema Sharadah Shatam—"May we behold this divine creation for a hundred years." Over 50-day period, 2,37,964 individuals benefitted from free eye examination, while 1,63,652 received free spectacles and 17,069 underwent Cataract surgery for free. More than 300 eye specialists and 2800 workers worked for this Seva initiative.

At the same time, hundreds of students from different fields of medicine received internships due to Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), Pharma Vision, and Medivision efforts. This enabled them to assist the devotees directly. Medivision, Jigyasa, and Pharma Vision have



been actively offering prompt medical assistance in response to random unfortunate accidents that have occurred on the mela grounds, guaranteeing prompt treatment and first aid for everyone in need.

Beyond healthcare and diagnostics, the effort expanded to include awareness initiatives and preventive healthcare. Along with attempts to educate women about infections common in such huge gatherings, devotees received free medications and treatment. The distribution of necessities, such as medications and menstrual hygiene products, reaffirmed the dedication to overall wellbeing.

### **Inclusivity and Samarasata (Social Harmony)**

Tribals' participation in Prayagraj's Maha Kumbh 2025 was at an all-time high, encouraged by Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and its inspired Akhil Bharatiya Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram (ABVKA). The Yuva Kumbh which is being attended by over 10,000 youths from all over Bharat is developing a new generation of leaders who are both well-grounded in their cultural heritage and capable of refuting divisive conspiracies. Furthermore, 25,000 tribal devotees gathered in large numbers during Janjati Sammelan (Tribal Conference), signifying a shared dedication to upholding indigenous customs, opposing religious conversion attempts, and reaffirming their crucial role within Sanatan Dharma. These sizable gatherings are not merely ceremonial; they are also important for cultural revitalization and the reaffirmation of tribal identity within the larger Hindu setting.

Beyond these conferences, RSS's dedication to Samarasata (social harmony) is seen in a number of ground-breaking Maha Kumbh 2025 activities. Through shared religious experiences, the Samrasata Bhoj (Harmony Feasts), which bring together thousands of devotees from various segments of society, challenge long-standing societal divisions and advance equality. A break from hierarchical customs is seen in the Kumbh's inclusion of tribal and Dalit priests in important religious ceremonies, which shows a determined attempt to include historically underrepresented groups in the spiritual mainstream. A potent declaration of cohesion, the huge tribal rally that ends with a holy dip at Triveni Sangam represents the inseparable bond between Hindu civilization and tribal tradition.

The ABVKA's efforts during the Maha Kumbh 2025 are a component of its larger objective, which includes 20,000 welfare projects and 50,000 tribal villages throughout Bharat. These

initiatives go beyond cultural preservation because the 12 crore tribal people make up a sizable portion of the population. They also try to recapture historical narratives and thwart outside attempts to split Hindu society. The movement's social influence is highlighted by its persistent struggle against religious conversions, especially through the Janjati Suraksha Manch's support of legislative improvements. In addition to strengthening Hindu unity, the RSS and ABVKA are making sure that Sanatan Dharma continues to be a cohesive and inclusive force in the future by encouraging significant tribal participation at the Maha Kumbh.

### **Cultural and Spiritual Efforts**

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has taken an innovative step by enabling 8,000 students from economically disadvantaged and Scheduled Caste (SC) backgrounds to participate in the Maha Kumbh at Prayagraj through its inspired education-related organization, Vidya Bharti. This program is an organized attempt to introduce these students to the spiritual and cultural legacy of Bharat, not just a pilgrimage. The first group of 2,100 children, all older than ten and enrolled in Sanskar Kendras, will witness the holy fusion of philosophy, tradition, and faith. In light of the rising challenges associated with religious conversions and cultural disconnection in underprivileged areas, this program seeks to give these students a feeling of identification and community. The Maha Kumbh, regarded as the largest spiritual gathering on Earth, offers them an unparalleled opportunity to witness and internalize the profound ethos of Sanatan Dharma, reinforcing their cultural roots and strengthening their spiritual resilience.

Simultaneously, the Maha Kumbh has emerged as an important forum for interfaith discourse, as seen by the historic gathering of Buddhist monks, Sanatan Dharma sadhus, and other religious leaders. The presence of representatives from Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Japan, Korea, Cambodia, and Vietnam highlights the shared spiritual lineage of Buddhism and Sanatan Dharma. Three key resolutions were passed at the event: one calling for the rights of persecuted minorities in Bangladesh and Pakistan, another supporting Tibet's autonomy, and one reaffirming the commitment to developing Sanatan-Buddhist unity. The majestic procession of Buddhist monks, accompanied by chanting of "Buddham Sharanam Gacchami," was a historical reaffirmation of the inherent harmony between these two ancient Bharatiya traditions. These events strengthen Bharat's standing as a world's spiritual leader and show that its soft power goes beyond its military might and economic prowess to create a peaceful and inclusive global order.

Former RSS sarkaryavah Bhaiyyaji Joshi stressed that the Maha Kumbh is a symbol of Bharat's unity and civilizational strength, not only a religious event. Bhaiyyaji presented a compelling vision in which the spiritual traditions of Bharat serve as the unifying factor in a world that is becoming more and more divided. He stated that genuine leadership is found in promoting unity rather than amassing wealth or military dominance. Gyari Dolma, the exiled Tibetan defense minister, celebrated the occasion as a turning point in Sanatan-Buddhist ties and reaffirmed that harmony between both traditions is necessary for world peace. This meeting of spiritual leaders, social justice resolutions, and extensive cultural immersion programs shows how the RSS-led project at the Maha Kumbh is not only conserving Bharat's legacy but also establishing it as a leading voice in the international conversation about spiritual revival, peace, and cultural identity.

### **Larger Vision Beyond Mahakumbh 2025**

With its unmatched scope and profound cultural significance, Maha Kumbh 2025 served as a major platform for societal transformation, Hindu unification, and national revival under the selfless leadership of RSS. Sangh envisions a revitalized Hindu society that is firmly grounded in its spiritual character while actively addressing modern issues. This vision is emphasized by careful planning, selfless service, environmental sustainability measures, and inclusive outreach.

In its essence, RSS's participation in the Maha Kumbh is a part of a larger belief to fortify Hindu identity and promote a unified national consciousness rather than a one-off event. Sangh has established the foundation for a sustained civilizational revival by bringing Bharat's spiritual traditions to the attention of the world, fostering cultural and intellectual dialogue, and uniting excluded people. A well-considered approach that goes beyond short-term mobilization and aims to bring about long-lasting societal change is indicated by the organized initiatives in service, sustainability, health, and social harmony.

The effects of the Maha Kumbh 2025 are anticipated to extend much beyond its immediate time frame. It helped to revitalize the sense of patriotism by promoting Hindu unity and showcasing an inclusive yet strong cultural identity. For upcoming Hindu renaissance initiatives, the combination of environmental awareness, social inclusion, and intellectual pursuits establishes a standard and provides a reproducible template for extensive cultural revitalization.

This Maha Kumbh provided a template for a time when Bharat regained its position as a world spiritual leader via a dynamic interaction of faith, service, and social change rather than just rituals. The actions taken marked a new era in which Hindu society, strengthened by its customs, is ready to create a peaceful and culturally rich community. Future generations will be guided toward a more united and spiritually awakened Bharat by the Maha Kumbh's enduring legacy, which flows like the sanctified waters of the Triveni Sangam.

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