

# Devotees praise 'Brand UP' at Kumbh

## Unbelievable Makeover, Say Kumbh Tourists

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**Prayagraj:** AI-driven surveillance, underwater drones, cashless transactions, luxury tent city, water ambulances, digital lost and found system, AI-powered Kumbh SahAIyak, WhatsApp helpline and RFID wristbands for effective crowd control, emergency response, and data management.

This monumental Maha Kumbh Mela, falling after 144 years, promises a spiritual journey like no other, showcasing the immense transformation of Uttar Pradesh under Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

And, crores of devotees and cultural aficionados thronging Sangam are all praise for the changed face of Prayagraj, saying 'Brand UP' has made a global impact with world-class arrangements at Maha Kumbh.

"My God... it's unbelievable. Coming to Prayagraj after 8 years, I lost my way. I simply could not make out which area I was in. With broad roads, renovated crossings, vibrant graffiti, new flyover, it's not the same Prayagraj where I lived for 20 years," Megha Tanwar, a software engineer now based in Bengaluru, told TOI.

Praising the govt for all-round development, she said: "Not just Prayagraj, the entire Uttar Pradesh has got a beautiful makeover... Enhanced air connectivity, flyovers and high-tech Kumbh were once a distant dream. But, the govt has turned

this into a reality."

Amidst chants of 'Mera Bharat Mahaan' and 'Rajaon ka raja Prayagraj', another devotee from Tamil Nadu Rajshhekar Pillai said: "I came to Uttar



Pradesh with a different perception, but will leave this state with a changed perception of high-tech state with a 'jabardast' security apparatus." His wife Sundari nodded in agreement.

The ministry of tourism

has established an 'Incredible India Pavilion' at the Kumbh Mela, highlighting the cultural significance and heritage of this sacred gathering.

The pavilion displays luxury accommodation and improved flight connections, whilst encouraging visitors to experience one of the world's largest religious congregations in Prayagraj. "To ensure seamless travel for tourists attending the Maha Kumbh, the ministry has partnered with several airlines to enhance air connectivity to Prayagraj from multiple cities across India. This will facilitate easier access for domestic and international visitors, allowing them to reach the event with ease and convenience," it said.

The spiritual extravaganza has attracted a diverse set of foreigners who also appreciated 'Brand UP', saying, "This is not

the Kumbh we saw in documentaries and magazines. Here, we can find South Korean YouTubers filming the festival and also Japanese tourists keenly learning about the traditions alongside European pilgrims. And the use of technology is simply incredible," said Christina Jones from Birmingham.

Another tourist from Westminster in central London was quick to join Christina. "I came to Prayagraj in 2013 and 2019 as well, but this Kumbh is like no other for all good reasons," Rose Nazareth said.

Set up in a sprawling 5000 sqft space at Maha Kumbh, the pavilion is facilitating foreign tourists, scholars, researchers, photographers, journalists, the expat community and Indian diaspora members among others. The pavilion provides visitors with "an immersive ex-

perience", highlighting India's cultural heritage, particularly focusing on UP and the Kumbh Mela's importance. Visitors can participate in the 'Dekho Apna Desh People's Choice Poll' to select their preferred Indian tourist destinations.

The ministry has partnered with various tourism organisations including the Uttar Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation (UPSTDC), IRCTC and ITDC to provide 'curated tour packages and luxury accommodation options'.

To create awareness about the upcoming Maha Kumbh, the ministry has initiated a comprehensive social media campaign. They are utilising specific hashtags like #Maha-kumbh2025 and #SpiritualPrayagraj to encourage public participation and sharing of event experiences.