

# Big brands cash in on Kumbh euphoria

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**Prayagraj:** From dome accommodations featuring luxurious amenities and breathtaking views costing Rs 1 lakh a night to leading food chains setting shops and humble small businesses, the mela economy has grown big in the sprawling 4,000-hectare mela premises on the banks of Sangam in Prayagraj.

With 5.15 crore devotees converging on Sangam on the first two major bathing days, Paush Purnima and Makar Sankranti, food chains like Cafe Coffee Day, Amul, Coca-Cola, and Domino's are also going all out on advertising and marketing to capitalise on the world's largest religious congregation.

Various private chains have also set up food courts and stalls in the vast area to cater to the heavy influx of pilgrims and tourists.

This time, a 100 x 130 ft land has been leased out to a private player for setting up a giant food court for a whopping Rs 1.22 crore licence fee during



Dairy company Amul has also set up shop at Maha Kumbh. Various private chains have also set up food courts and stalls in the vast area to cater to the heavy influx of pilgrims

Maha Kumbh. The mela administration also earmarked vending zones in all the 25 sectors of Maha Kumbh that have been leased out for setting shops, amusement zones and restaurants.

With an anticipated footfall of over 40 crore, the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) projects that Maha Kumbh is likely to generate a stagge-

ring Rs 2 trillion business.

According to industry insiders, FMCG firms, banks and startups have come up with strategies and promotional activities to woo consumers.

In an unprecedented move, top nationalised banks in India are issuing special edition debit and credit cards featuring the Maha Kumbh logo. The State Bank of India (SBI) is also issuing special edition debit cards for the 2025 Maha Kumbh festival. These cards have been issued since Nov 2024 and will continue till Feb. Bank of Baroda is using the opportunity to market its new UPI payment PSP app Bob Epay.

Hoping to keep their businesses afloat, small vendors like tea sellers, 'prasad' shops and those selling vegetables, fruits, household utensils and Ganga Jal containers are also eyeing a business of around Rs 1,000-5,000 a day, depending on the influx of devotees.

"By noon, I sold 500 cups of tea costing Rs 10 each. Seeing the footfall, I have my fingers crossed," said Vijay Chaurasia, a tea vendor from Etawah.