

₹5,000cr investment in Maha Kumbh to generate biz worth ₹2L cr, says CM

At TOI Conclave, Yogi Shares His Vision On Spiritual Tourism

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Lucknow: The Maha Kumbh, which is expected to attract more than 40 crore visitors, is likely to see generation of business worth Rs 2 lakh crore, said Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday. He questioned the intent of those criticising UP govt's expenditure of Rs 5,000 crore on the event.

The CM was speaking as the chief guest at the 'Divine

Prayagraj, which propelled some people to the height of power, was left ignored since Independence. It was Prime Minister Narendra Modi who planned sustainable growth for the city

YOGI ADITYANATH
Chief Minister

Uttar Pradesh - The Must Visit Sacred Journey', a conclave organised by The Times of India in Lucknow to celebrate the immense potential of Maha Kumbh to drive growth, tourism, and development in the state and also to mark the first anniversary of the consecration of the Ram Lalla idol.

Senior govt officials and experts came together to discuss UP's evolution as a hub for religious tourism and how this would drive the state's journey to becoming a USD1 trillion economy in the coming years.

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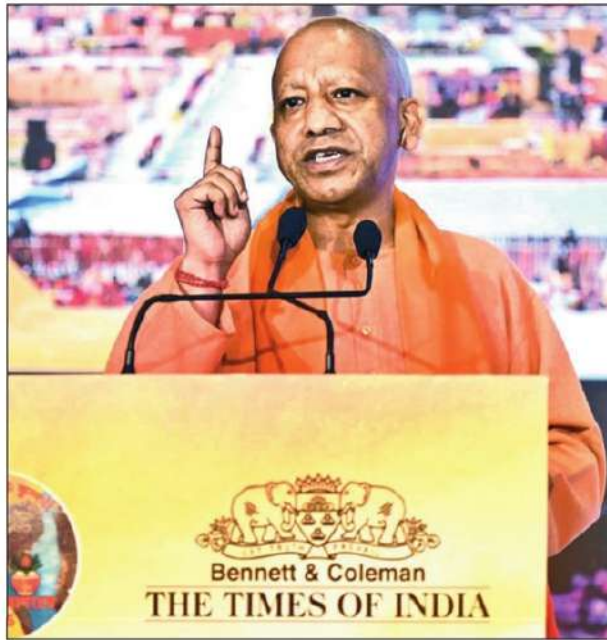
Justifying govt investment of Rs 5,000 crore on the event, the CM said that the arrival of crores of devotees in the state would see much more revenue come back to govt. "Barely 50 lakh devotees visited Varanasi in a year before 2017, but in 2024 there were 16 crore visitors to the city. In 2016, a total 2.83 lakh domestic devotees and 1,200 foreign tourists visited Ayodhya. Between Jan and Sep 2024, a total 13.55 crore visitors came to Ayodhya. When a devotee visits UP, he uses transport, eats in a restaurant, lives in a hotel, shops, etc., and spends an average of Rs 5,000 per visit. By that calculation, just Varanasi earns Rs 80,000 crore," the CM said.

Hitting out at the Opposition, the CM said that those questioning the UP govt were those who feel pride in their association with foreign invaders and not India. He accused them of not liking the development of Ayodhya, Prayagraj, Mathura-Vrindavan, or Varanasi as they worked to divide on caste, religious, and regional lines.

MAHA KUMBH
PRAYAGRAJ, 2025
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"Some people might not like how much work has been done. Prayagraj is such an ancient city and has been leading India's spiritual growth. This city, which propelled some people to the height of power, was left ignored since Independence. It was Prime Minister Narendra Modi who planned sustainable growth for the city," the CM said.

► **Yogi thanks PM, P6**



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath at TOI Conclave in Lucknow on Wednesday

A conjunction once every 144 yrs: Why this Maha Kumbh is special

Prayagraj: The Maha Kumbh Mela is a rare spiritual event set to take place from Jan 13 to Feb 26 at Prayagraj. As the holy city prepares to host crores of devotees, the excitement is intense among sadhus, Kalpvasis, pilgrims, and local residents alike.

TOI looks into the details of what is so special about this year's Maha Kumbh and why celestial positioning of planets makes this Maha Kumbh so "very special" — occurring after 144 years. The position of Jupiter, Sun, and Moon are taken into consideration, and the zodiac sign in which they lie is also checked. **P6**