Magh Mela

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Why in News?

In view of the Magh Mela in Prayagraj, around 350 industrial units in Kanpur were directed to suspend operations for 46 days to maintain the water quality.

- **Magh Mela –** It is one of the ***big religious events after Mahakumbh***, an annual pilgrimage in Prayagraj, where devotees bathe at the Sangam on auspicious dates.
- **Location –** It is held at Triveni Sangam, Prayag (Allahabad/Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh), the ***confluence of 3 sacred rivers*** - Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati.
- **Duration–** It is a ***45-day-long pilgrimage*** that occurs in the Hindu month of Magh (Jan–Feb), on Paush Purnima and ending on Mahashivaratri.
- **Historical References –** Its records date back to the 7th century CE.
  - **Hiuen Tsang**, the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, documented gatherings at Prayag.
  - **Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh**, a 17th-century Persian text about India authored in Persian in Aurangzeb's court, mentions annual Hindu bathing festivals.
- **6 major ritual baths (snans)** – Major snan days include Paush Purnima, Makar Sankranti, Mauni Amavasya, Basant Panchami, Maghi Purnima and Mahashivratri.
- **Kalpvas tradition –** Devotees (Kalpvasis) live in temporary shelters by the river, performing daily yajnas, havans, and charitable acts.
- **Donations –** People contribute food and ritual items; three primary donations include Bhojdan (food), Atradan (grains), Tiladan (sesame).
- **Difference from Kumbh Mela**
  - **Magh Mela** - Annual, held only in Prayagraj.
  - **Kumbh Mela** - Once every 12 years, it rotates across Prayagraj, Haridwar, Nashik, and Ujjain.
  - **Ardh Kumbh** - Every 6 years at Prayagraj.

References

1. Indian Express | Magh Mela
2. Indian Culture | Magh Mela



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