



Green Mahakumbh | Uttar Pradesh | 09 Jan 2025

Why in News?

On 31st January 2025, Prayagraj is going to host Green Mahakumbh, uniting over 1,000 environmental and [water conservation](#) workers from across the country.

- Shiksha Sanskriti Utthan Nyas has organized this unique event as part of the [Gyan Mahakumbh](#), with Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister acting as its chief patron.

Key Points

- **National-Level Discussion on Environment:**
 - The discussion will **address issues related to nature, the environment, water, and cleanliness.**
 - Experts will share insights on **balancing the five elements of nature and tackling associated challenges.**
 - The event will **explore methods to raise awareness among Mahakumbh visitors** about environmental protection and cleanliness campaigns.
 - Government agencies, public representatives, and local citizens are working together to ensure the success of [the Clean Mahakumbh initiative.](#)
- **Swachhata Rath Yatra:**
 - [The Swachhata Rath Yatra](#) was also launched in Prayagraj to **promote cleanliness and raise public awareness**, attracting significant community participation.
 - **Objectives:**
 - It aims to **present Prayagraj as a symbol of cleanliness** for Mahakumbh devotees and tourists.
 - By maintaining a pristine environment along the Mahakumbh Nagar route, the **initiative ensures a welcoming atmosphere** for millions of expected visitors.
- **Awareness Campaign Through Performances:**
 - Street play artists carrying color-coded dustbins **demonstrated [proper waste segregation for wet and dry waste.](#)**
 - **A cleanliness-themed music band** performed alongside the chariot, reinforcing the message of maintaining a clean city.
 - **Safai Mitras (sanitation workers) and Municipal Corporation staff** played a vital role in promoting and implementing cleanliness measures.

Maha Kumbh

- Kumbh Mela comes under [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization \(UNESCO\)'s Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.](#)
- It is the largest peaceful congregation of pilgrims on earth, during which participants bathe or take a dip in a sacred river.
- It takes place on the banks of the [Godavari river in Nashik](#), the [Shipra river in Ujjain](#), the [Ganges in Haridwar](#), and the confluence of the [Ganges, Yamuna, and the mythical Saraswati river](#) in Prayagraj. The confluence is referred to as the 'Sangam'.

Caste Atrocity Complaint in UP | Uttar Pradesh | 09 Jan 2025

Why in News?

Recently, the [National Commission for Scheduled Castes \(NCSC\)](#) has acknowledged an atrocity complaint filed against a member of [Uttar Pradesh's Transgender Welfare Board](#).

- The movement for **horizontal reservation for transgender individuals in government jobs and education** is gaining momentum in northern India, inspired by activists in southern States.

Key Points

- **Horizontal and Vertical Reservations:**
 - **Vertical Reservations** create a **separate quota category under which all transgender individuals qualify**, regardless of their socio-economic background.
 - **Horizontal Reservations** allocate a **percentage of seats for transgender individuals within each socio-economic category**, addressing the layered discrimination faced by marginalized caste trans people.
 - Trans activists nationwide **advocate for horizontal reservations**, highlighting vertical quotas' failure to address caste-based discrimination within the transgender community.
- **NCSC Action on Complaint:**
 - NCSC issued notices to the Saharanpur district administration and police, based on a **complaint by a Dalit trans woman activist**.
 - She alleged that a **member of Uttar Pradesh's Transgender Welfare Board, harassed activists supporting horizontal reservations**.
 - She submitted a recording where the **member allegedly used casteist and transphobic slurs**, including deliberate misgendering.
 - The **member denied the allegations**, claiming the voice in the recording was not hers and questioning the legality of recording calls.
 - She accused the complainant of **misusing constitutional provisions** and plans to file complaints with the [National Human Rights Commission \(NHRC\)](#) and NCSC.
- **Debate on Reservation Policy:**
 - The 2014 Supreme Court judgment directed reservations for transgender individuals as "[Socially and educationally backward classes \(SEBC\)](#)," sparking differing interpretations.
 - In Madhya Pradesh, transgender individuals were added to the State OBC list in April 2023.
 - **High Courts**, including Karnataka, Madras, and Calcutta, have ruled in **favor of horizontal reservations**.
- **Diverging Opinions on Reservation:**
 - **One perspective supports vertical reservations**, asserting that discrimination against transgender individuals stems from gender, not caste.
 - It **challenges the idea that transgender individuals retain their caste identity after transitioning**, referencing the 2014 Supreme Court judgment.
 - The opposing view critiques this interpretation as overlooking the caste diversity within the transgender community, emphasizing that horizontal reservations address the layered discrimination faced by **marginalized caste transgender individuals**.
- **Broader Implications:**
 - The Supreme Court refused to clarify **the ambiguity in the 2014 judgment in March 2023**.
 - The debate underscores the need for nuanced policies to ensure equitable representation for transgender individuals across socio-economic categories.

National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSCs)

▪ About:

- The NCSC is a **Constitutional Body** established with a view to provide **safeguards against the exploitation of Scheduled Castes** and to promote and protect their social, educational, economic and cultural interests.

▪ Composition:

- The NCSC comprises a **Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, and three additional Members.**
- These positions are **filled through the President's appointment**, indicated by a warrant under his hand and seal.
- Their conditions of service and tenure of office are also determined by the President.

Sambhal Mosque Case | Uttar Pradesh | 09 Jan 2025

Why in News?

Recently, the Allahabad **High Court** sought **responses from the Central and State governments, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)**, and local authorities regarding a plea filed by the **Shahi Jama Masjid committee in Sambhal**, challenging a trial court's order.

Key Points

▪ Supreme Court's Stay:

- The trial court had directed an Advocate Commissioner to **survey the Shahi Jama Masjid** while handling a suit claiming the mosque was built by destroying a temple.
- In November 2024, **the Supreme Court** stayed the trial court's proceedings and **instructed that the matter should not be heard until the petition against the survey order is addressed in the Allahabad High Court.**
- The Supreme Court also ordered that **no new suits seeking surveys of any place of worship should be entertained until further notice.**

▪ Survey and Clashes:

- In 2024, the local court ordered a **survey of the Mughal-era mosque** following a petition claiming the **mosque was built in 1526** after demolishing a temple dedicated to Kalki, Lord Vishnu's last incarnation.
- The eight plaintiffs in the suit demanded the right to access the mosque.
- **Violence erupted in Sambhal on 24th November 2024 after clashes between police and protesters** against the survey, resulting in five deaths and multiple injuries.

Historical Context of the Jama Masjid

- The Jama Masjid in Sambhal is one of three mosques **constructed during Babur's reign (1526-1530)**. The others include the mosque at Panipat and the now-demolished Babri Masjid.
 - **Historian Howard Crane** described the mosque's architectural features in his work, **The Patronage of Babur and the Origins of Mughal Architecture.**
 - Crane noted a **Persian inscription stating that Babur ordered the mosque's construction in December 1526** through his subedar, **Jahangir Quli Khan.**

Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)

- ASI, under **the Ministry of Culture**, is the premier organisation for the archaeological research and protection of the cultural heritage of the nation.
 - **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958** governs the functioning of ASI.
- It administers more than 3650 ancient monuments, archaeological sites and remains of national importance.
- Its activities include carrying out surveys of antiquarian remains, exploration and excavation of archaeological sites, conservation and maintenance of protected monuments etc.
- It was **founded in 1861 by Alexander Cunningham- the first Director-General of ASI**. Alexander Cunningham is also known as the “Father of Indian Archaeology”.

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