

Traditional Education in Mahakumbh

Shipra Singh¹, Shivsharan Shukla^{2*}

1. Research Scholar, 2. Research Director, Department of Education LBS PG College Gonda,
Ex Convener Education Ram Manohar Lohia University. Ayodhya.

Email id: sshuklaavadh@gmail.com

Abstract

The Mahakumbh, held at the confluence of the sacred rivers Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati, is an ancient spiritual and cultural event that offers profound lessons on unity, tradition, and faith. Rooted deeply in Indian culture, the Mahakumbh is not just a religious gathering, but a representation of the educational values passed through generations. It embodies the ideals of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' or the concept that the world is one family, promoting harmony across diverse cultures. This article explores how the Mahakumbh serves as an open university, imparting education through its rituals, collective participation, and cultural exchanges. It emphasizes the role of the Kumbh in educating humanity about tradition, faith, and cultural pride, as well as the importance of unity in diversity. Furthermore, the article highlights how modern technological advancements, such as QR codes, are integrated into this sacred event, bridging the gap between tradition and innovation. The Mahakumbh thus becomes a global symbol of spiritual, cultural, and social education, providing invaluable teachings for individuals and societies at large.

Keywords: Mahakumbh, Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, Indian Culture, Unity in Diversity, Spiritual Education.

Introduction

From time immemorial, the unbroken nectar-essence of religion and spirituality has been present in our Indian culture. The characteristic of us Indians is that we have incorporated broad qualities in our religion, which is not only the art of living our lives but is our everything. In our culture, pilgrimage, festivals, meritorious deeds, charity, religious deeds, rituals, sacraments, celebrations – all these are for the purpose of welfare of our human life. A human being endowed with all these deeds purifies himself and attains self-welfare. Since the Vedic period, Indian sages and monks have considered the ultimate goal of human life to be salvation. Moksha may be a personal subject, but the path to reach this goal passes through public welfare. For this public welfare, we maintain our traditions through countless spiritual and social works. In the Indian culture in which spirituality is embedded, every particle of it teaches us something or the other through religious, social, economic, ethical, physical aspects. Our education is formed from these small teachings. The direction of our education is according to the society. Our culture is the basis of our education, which has been full of selfless emotion, the spirit of world welfare since time immemorial. Rising from this spirit of public welfare, the great objective of 'Kumbh-Parv' in 'Haridwar, Prayag, Ujjain and Nasik' – these four decided places of Kumbh-Parv, during the Kumbh-Yoga, by the assemblage of the respective sects, respected monks and saints, is to do the welfare of the world, for the removal of all kinds of troubles of the world and for the accomplishment of the welfare of the country, society, nation and religion etc. for the entire world." This Kumbh-Parv is indicative of that Indian culture, which includes the education given by rivers, rituals, sacraments and concerns. In this wonderful flowing stream of education, there are also the sounds

of rivers, to listen to which Kumbh himself comes and millions of people also come to get education from those sounds. This Kumbh-Parv is a confluence of diversities, in which 'Indian culture takes leaps, plays and has the power to absorb the whole world in itself.' This Mahakumbh educates the entire humanity in various ways with the colors of these characteristics.

Education of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam

Kumbh is the union of soul and God - it is an opportunity to recognize the self-form. This Kumbh is where Goddess of knowledge Saraswati, the river of devotion Ganga, and the river of action Yamuna meet. That is, it is a combination of knowledge, action and devotion. The attainment of Elixir of life is possible only through confluence. In separation, there is only separation. People from both domestic and foreign lands come to the Kumbh bath festival for this oneness and completeness and provide the education of becoming one.. It brings the entire world together on the banks of the Sangam. It is not just a confluence of rivers but an opportunity to bring the whole world on one stream. There is ideological difference in every society. From this point of view, the relevance of this Mahakumbh has increased. This confluence of ours is giving the education of our ancient heritage 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'. How can we live with differences under one roof, this kind of education. All the seven steps of 'Ramcharitmanas' composed by devotion of Sant Tulsidas are manifest and unmanifest confluences, which are giving us the education of unity in diversity.

In this Mahakumbh, the land of Prayagraj is also giving the education of providing the confluence of immense ideas i.e. thoughtful to the entire world. In fact, there is a emotion of collectivity in our culture, due to which it considers the entire world as one family. This is the reason why all kinds of cultures throng in

any Kumbh Mela. People from far and wide reach with their own cultural identity and they all give us the education of establishing mutual identity. We all get tied in such a thread, which can never be broken. Such is the consciousness of Indian culture, through which we impart the education of connecting the entire country and abroad in the thread of unity. This Kumbh educates everyone to become a part of a collective culture and to adopt its core spirit and sustain its continuous preservation. Such education, which this Mahakumbh makes available to us indirectly, is lagging behind the education provided by institutions and universities. In fact, we can call it an open university. While emphasizing the importance and the education of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' from the Kumbh, it is stated in the Vedas-

युवं नरा स्तुवते पञ्चियाय कक्षीवते अरदतं पुरंधिम्।

कारोतराच्छफादश्वस्य वृष्णः शत कुम्भां असिञ्चतं सुरायाः ।।

(ऋग्वेद 1/116/7)

कुम्भोवनिष्टुर्जनिता शचीभिर्यस्मिन्नग्रेयोन्त्यां गर्भो अन्तः।

प्लाशिर्व्यक्तः शतधारउत्सो दुहे न कुम्भी स्वधां पितृभ्यः ।।

(शुक्ल यजुर्वेद 19/87)

This Kumbh, together with the world culture and religion, by coming together with all the cultures, gives the education of considering national, international unity, integrity, imperishability.

Education of Tradition and Faith

The world's largest religious and spiritual confluence is visible in the Triveni of Maa Ganga, Yamuna and the invisible Saraswati. This Mahakumbh, after 12 Mahakumbhs, this wonderful coincidence of Mahakumbh has come after 144 years. This Mahakumbh is personify the divinity, grandeur and cultural heritage of our traditions. Seeing all this, we can say that there are such elements in our Indian culture, due to which UNESCO i.e. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization included Kumbh Mela in the list of 'Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity' in the year 2017. Such artists reach in this Mahakumbh, who really have amazing ability, which manifests with joy in this fair. Here cultures inherited with differences spread, all people mix with each other. The Mahakumbh Mela is colored in different colors. The concept of unity and collectivity exists in our Indian culture. We have considered the entire earth as one family. In all our activities, collectivity comes first, then individuality. This is the real reason why it has the power to absorb the entire world within itself. It is clearly visible that people from abroad have come to the banks of Sangam and are dancing. From this we are getting the education that Mahakumbh is becoming a part of the heritage of collective culture. It is giving us the education to connect with tradition and faith. In this Kumbh, the difference between east and west, north and south is disappearing. This is the characteristic of Kumbh,

which brings it to the global level. India is a grand temple of Sanatan and the consciousness of the people of our country is the priestess of the temple. When Indians have to express gratitude towards their culture, we want to immerse ourselves in the sentiment of the pilgrimage fair Kumbh, such a sentiment where there is joy. The characteristic of our culture is that while bathing in the river, we offer oblations to the sun. All this is providing us the education of faith towards our culture. The confluence of Prayagraj, the rivers Ganga-Yamuna-Saraswati, which are indicative of knowledge-action-power as well as truth-consciousness-bliss. When we come here, the achievement of dharma occurs, the wealth is reinforced, and satisfaction in desire is obtained. Moksha is not possible without these three. When we come to Kumbh Mela, we listen to the heartbeat of India. Here, the fragrance of faith and trust keeps spreading, everyone feels it. This Mahakumbh is providing education on the interrelationship of spirituality and science, about how solid decisions will be made regarding the protection of ancient architecture in India, then the rays of youth influence will illuminate the whole world. This Mahakumbh under the leadership of progressive youth will prove to be the source of 'Innovation in Fair'. Therefore, this Mahakumbh of tradition and faith has been called 'Grand-Divine-New Mahakumbh'. This Mahakumbh is a fair of coordination of global religion-science-culture.

Education of Making Culture's Pride a Grand Festival

In the culture of India, there is a confluence of rivers, a confluence of religions, a confluence of traditions and beliefs. This is the characteristic of this country. This is the characteristic of Indian culture, which considers merging together as its completeness. The form of Kumbh that is being seen in the present is teaching the pride of culture as a grand festival. This is the same confluence bank where Maharishi Yajnavalkya first narrated the Ramkatha to Bharadwaj. Kumbh is also discussed in Ramkatha. Maharishi Agastya, who drank the ocean in his pot-belly, Shankarji heard Ramkatha near the same Kumbhaj. Kumbh, Kumbhaj, Shiv and Ramkatha are all infinite. Only the infinite can drink the infinite. Only the infinite can represent the infinite. On the occasion of this Kumbh, the people who are bathing are getting the fortune to be at the place where the Bharat Ocean has also bathed. The divine knowledge of Shri Ram, Sitaji, and Lakshmanji has been manifested. This feeling of pride is educating us to celebrate it as a grand festival in the form of devotion, knowledge, and action within us. Bathing means the complete immersion of every limb and part in water, leaving nothing remaining. Only then will the union of soul and body occur. Here in Prayag, on the banks of the Sangam, the essence of cultural expansion from one end to the other is present in the form of religion. The festival has been created here by the blend of various cultures. There is some uniqueness in the foundation of all the cultures and the uniqueness of all the cultures together is beckoning as Kumbh-festival. As soon as the Sun God enters Capricorn, the Triveni of Tirthraj

Prayag swells with pride. It is the same that Tulsidasji has said- 'The pure waters of Ganga and Yamuna, the invisible Saraswati blends in the sentiments, and along with it, an immense flow of the populace. 'This scene of saint-Naga ascetics like gods and the Amrit bath is teaching the making of a festival.' When the yogic conjunction of planetary constellations occurs, then this great pot of Vedic Mahakumbh's auspicious time flows. Millions of devotees come during the winter solstice of the sun with the desire to attain immortality from this world to the next and take a dip in the confluence. The unparalleled crowd of faith and belief has made us realize the descent into the confluence. This experience has provided the education of the depth of spirituality, so that the union of the soul and the supreme soul can take place. In this Amrit bath, the saints and ascetics, adorned and fully prepared, celebrated the festival of Vedic Mahakumbh reinstated by Adishankaracharya ji by witnessing spiritual consciousness, in which the entire populace became one. The convoy of vehicles equipped with chariots and bullock carts moved towards the confluence in the morning, as if it was a grand festival. Honorable Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Pujya Yogi Adityanathji Maharaj, while adorning this festival with flower showers from a helicopter, has emphasized making the pride of this culture a grand celebration.

Education of Becoming the Carrier of Enculturation

In this Kumbh Mela, people from around the world participate with their way of living, thoughts, customs, values, behaviors and share their heritage with the locals, making a connection so that they can take something back with them. This is a tradition that brings a sense of freshness to individuals. When one culture merges with another, newness is born. We learn something from each other. This is the education of cultural integration. This Kumbh Mela provides us with a cultural laboratory to fundamentally renew our spiritual, social, mental, and physical consciousness during the Kumbh period. In this laboratory, new songs, narratives, stories, and forms are created and preserved for future generations. In the present time, as we dive into technologies like Artificial Intelligence, Robotics and Chip Communication, nature is imparting lessons on cultural integration to us in this era. This fair is educating us on how we can stay connected with our traditions, values and concerns while also staying connected with technology. This Mahakumbh fair of the 25th year of the 21st century in Prayagraj is presenting a new aura of our Indian culture and continuous learning from various cultures. It is educating us as carriers of civilization and the entire humanity is being guided in the direction of this civilization. It is providing education on the blending of Indian culture and foreign cultures. In this Mahakumbh, our modern generation will conduct scientific analysis of Indian culture, which is very important in opening new doors for the future. Our new generation is understanding the meaning of faith. Everyone is gaining knowledge that our sages and acharyas were scientists. They have explained what they have directly observed. We Indians

are now realizing that what is eternal truth is Sanatan. The education of coordination of all types is the meaning of Sangam...

Sangam is not only the confluence of Ganga-Yamuna and the indirect Saraswati but is the carrier of bringing the entire world onto one earth. Kumbh gives the message of establishing the connection of coordination between the people of the entire world. On the earth of Prayagraj, the confluence of many thoughts takes place during this Kumbh. Gods and demons both take a dip together in the confluence, that is, two opposing ideologies, lifestyles, diets, and despite all types of discrimination, they bathe together. Tulsidasji says- our entire nation is a pilgrimage itself, but where there is immortality, culture that never dies, that is pilgrimage. Here in our country, Kumbh festival is celebrated in four pilgrimage sites- Haridwar, Prayag, Ujjain and Nasik. These are all pilgrimage sites more than one. When people bathe in it, they receive the essence of immortality. It is mentioned in Skand Purana-

**तान्येव यः पुमान् योगे सोऽमृतवाय कल्पते।
देवा नमन्ति तत्रस्थान् यथा रङ्गा धनाधिपान्।।**

(स्कंदपुराण)

'When the great sage Brihaspati is situated in Aries and the Moon and Sun are situated in Capricorn, at that time Kumbh Yoga takes place in Tirthraj Prayag: It is described in Skand Purana like this-

**मेषराशि गते जीवे मकरे चन्द्रभास्करौ।
अमावस्या तदा योगः कुम्भायस्तीर्थनायके।।**

(स्कंदपुराण)

In this Kumbh at the Sangam coast, there are three types of bath. The first bath starts from the day of Makar Sankranti. The second bath is on the day of Magh Krishna Mauni Amavasya and the third bath is on Magh Shukla Vasant Panchami. All these types of baths provide peace and stability to the body, mind, and soul.

**मकरे च दिवानाथे ह्यजगे च बृहस्पतौ।
कुम्भयोगो भवेन्नत्र प्रयागे ह्यतिदुर्लभः।।**

(स्कंदपुराण)

Kumbh means the pot of nectar. In our culture, Kumbh is considered auspicious. It is hard on the outside and empty on the inside, in which numerous virtues and qualities can be included. This structure of Kumbh also teaches us to make ourselves like it. On the banks of Sangam, the treasures of dharma, artha, kama, and moksha are all open, which anyone who desires can take from here. All the impurities of the human mind are destroyed. Here is the path to the resolution of every difficulty of humanity.

Akshayvat is the canopy of Tirthraj Prayag. This Akshayvat keeps our culture unbroken and infinite. Akshay means that which is eternal and is the symbol of faith. This Akshayvat teaches us to maintain eternal faith in our culture, religion. In Prayagraj, the roots of Akshayvat have existed since time immemorial as knowledge, in which if any lethal combustible substance is inserted, it will be destroyed. In this way,

this Akshayvat educates us to suppress thousands of evils within ourselves. This Kumbh at the Sangam bank teaches us to share our cultural significance with spiritual values amidst each other's diversities. Here there is an opportunity to reflect on various types of challenges and misconceptions and to resolve them. During this Kumbh Mela, various human powers unite and preserve our cultural purity. At present, numerous teachings related to Kumbh are also guiding us.

The education of the living Kumbh story

Revered Maharajji Chief Minister Yogi Adityanathji meets the saints at the camps of the akharas who have come to this Maha Kumbh, inquires about their well-being. He tries to understand their issues. He listens to the matters shared by the saints seriously. He assures them that the problems mentioned by the saints will be resolved quickly. This teaches us the importance of hospitality and mutual relationships. Along with being the global technological era, this Kumbh festival has also become digital. The world of roads, various offices, temples, vehicles, trains, tents, camps, akharas, boats, and babas has also become a part of technology in the entire Kumbh area. In the fair area, Prayagraj's squares, streets, posters, banners, everywhere you see the form of black blotches in square boxes. This is the box of technology, it is called 'QR code'. There are different things in it. You can search for

the things you need in it. The entire Kumbh is encompassed in it. You have to give a donation or the money for the tea shop, this 'QR code' comes in handy. You want a railway ticket, you want to book a vehicle for tourism or you want to see the path of Kumbh, everything will be available here. Know about the religious places of Prayagraj, the location of buses, everything will be made available on mobile through this QR code. This QR code will be useful for you to join online aarti, to do online worship as well.

Conclusion

The Mahakumbh is more than just a religious gathering; it is a profound educational experience that conveys timeless lessons on unity, cultural preservation, and spiritual wisdom. Rooted in ancient Indian traditions, the Kumbh teaches the world the importance of collective well-being, faith, and the harmonious integration of diverse cultures. As the world moves forward technologically, the Mahakumbh continues to serve as an enduring symbol of how spirituality and technology can coexist. Through this festival, humanity receives invaluable education that fosters peace, unity, and a deeper connection to one's cultural and spiritual heritage. The Mahakumbh thus remains a beacon of knowledge, not just for India, but for the entire world.
