

The world's second largest city?

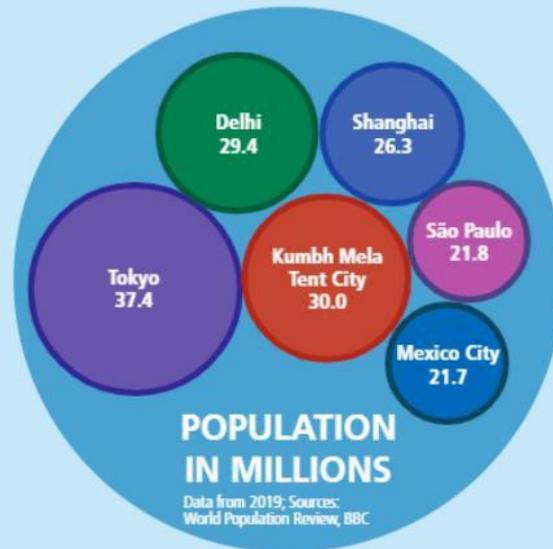
About 120 million people visited Kumbh Mela tent city over 49 days in 2019. There were 30 million there on the busiest day—not quite as many people as live in Tokyo, but more than every other city in the world. What makes this more amazing is that this **metropolis** is temporary.

Every three years, a city of tents appears as part of the **celebration** of Kumbh Mela at one of four places in India: Haridwar, Ujjain, Nashik, or Prayagraj. The festival is believed to be the largest single **gathering** in the world. One of the main activities is washing in the water of India's great rivers: the Ganges, the Shipra, the Jamuna, or the Sarasvati, depending on the location of the meeting. There are also musical performances, dancing, and a great variety of food.

Throughout the day and night, announcements over the speaker system reveal the human drama of life in the tent city. "Whoever has taken my pants that were drying on my car," a voice says, "at least return the car keys from the pocket. You can keep the pants." And "It is Babu speaking. I have lost my wallet and brother. Please come here the moment you hear this."

Creating the city requires more than a year of planning. Like any urban area, the Prayagraj Mela has its own government, called the Prayagraj Mela Authority, set up in 2017. Here's what they provided in 2019:

- 122,000 toilets
- 20,000 trash cans
- 300 kilometers of roads
- 524 buses
- more than 4,200 luxury tents
- more than 1,500 rickshaws (small taxis)



People coming for short stays usually bring their own meals, but the authorities also supplied basic foods for purchase. In addition, they set up 160 stations to provide clean drinking water.

Like any big city, Kumbh Mela has a healthcare system. In 2019, this included a central **medical center** with 100 beds as well as 10 smaller clinics. On busy days, a staff of 193 doctors and more than 1,500 other healthcare professionals treated 10,000 people.

Kumbh Mela also has a police department. In 2019, more than 30,000 police officers operated 40 police stations, directed traffic, and worked to keep people safe.

There were also 22,000 cleaners to keep the city clean.

Dr. Ashok Kumar Paliwal, head of the health and family welfare team at the festival's hospital, appears to feel that the word "city" may not be enough to describe Kumbh Mela. "It's an ambitious project," he says. "What we are creating here is a country."

1. How many people were in Kumbh Mela tent city on its most crowded day in 2019?

- a 120 million b 30 million

2. What is an important part of every Kumbh Mela festival?

- a dancing b washing yourself

3. What did two people make an announcement about?

- a lost people and things b warnings about traffic

4. What did the organizers provide in 2019?

- a free food b medical help

5. Which group of people was the largest in 2019?

- a police officers b cleaners