

Analysis of Organisation of Kumbh Mela and their Respective Locations across India

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Abstract:

The Kumbh Mela is the world's largest religious gathering, where millions of people gather along sacred riverbanks. It is held at a regular interval of 12 years in four cities: Prayagraj, Haridwar, Ujjain and Nashik. Maha Kumbh is held at Prayagraj only once in 144 years. It is also the largest human gathering ever recorded in history with over 70 million pilgrims in 2001 (Prayagraj), 120 million in 2013, and 600–660 million in the 2025 Maha Kumbh. It is a significant event from the viewpoint of culture and religion; it creates a large temporary city with the needed planning and infrastructure. The main objective of the research is to study the effect of Kumbh Mela on urbanization and land use change. This study aims to identify the influenced zone near Kumbh, to analyze the satellite data and to classify the Land Use and Land Cover (LULC) to find out the variation in the built-up area, vegetation, barren land, agricultural land and water bodies. The research focuses on the temporary urban extension and spatial transformation of the event. The analysis shows that temporary settlements, roads, and facilities for pilgrimage cause a significant rise in built-up areas, mainly along the river banks. Prayagraj has maximum change with sector-based planning, Haridwar has linear riverfront growth, Nashik has clustered growth and Ujjain has regulated growth. During the event, agricultural land is mostly stable, while vegetation and barren land decline. The overall analysis shows the Kumbh Mela as a unique example of temporary urban growth with adaptable and sustainable planning. It helps researchers and planners to understand how to deal with large-scale events with minimal environmental impact, efficient land use and temporary infrastructure.

Keywords:

kumbh mela, land use and land cover, ephemeral city, gis analysis, temporary urbanisation, large scale gatherings.