



ত্রিবেনী কুম্ভ পরিচালনা সমিতি

www.tribenikumbho.org Regd. No. 000140/2022

Press Note: May 20, 2023

www.tribenikumbho.org

Email: tribenikumbho@gmail.com

Tribeni Kumbho Porichalona Somity, a registered non-profit NGO, is guided by spiritual gurus headed by Mahamandaleswar Srimat Swami Paramatmananda. All activities are taken up based on the guidance of the sadhus.

To understand the importance of Tribeni, Hooghly, one does not necessarily require history or archaeology, or for that matter, foreigner's testimonials. It is self-evident.

There is generally a meaning to a name given to a person or place. The name "Tribeni", meaning a cluster of three 'benis' (braids), itself indicates that people knew about the sacredness of this place since the time of unknown antiquity. Every sacred location has been turned into a pilgrimage place by the Hindus. So if you want to know when the pilgrimage to Tribeni started, you need to know, at least, when the city was so named. As far as I know, there is no such information available, and for that matter, for most places of pilgrimage in India. Any effort to find the age and antiquity of cities like Varanasi, Ujjain, and Kashi is futile.

Tribeni means three braids in the form of rivers, which is the case with Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh and Tribeni, Hooghly West Bengal. Both are called Tribeni Sangam, meaning the confluence of three rivers. That's the reality and fact anyone can verify on their own. The confluence of three rivers, especially associated with the Ganga, is very significant in Hindu tradition.

Do Hindus bathe in Tribeni Hooghly? Yes, just like Prayag or Haridwar, they do and have been doing it for centuries. So, Tribeni Sangam is an important place of pilgrimage for the Hindus – be it Nasik, Ujjain, or Tribeni, Hooghly.

Now let us talk about Kumbh. Purana stories and legends apart, people used to take holy baths in large congregations in Prayag, Ujjain, Nasik, Haridwar, and other such sacred places. It is hard to find any reference to these congregations and snans as 'Kumbh' before 1849. It may not have been recorded as

'Kumbh Snan' or 'Kumbh Mela' – but these mela's and snans happened nevertheless. Indian history is so long, and so much turmoil happened during the periods of invasions and occupations, records are not always available, and the same is the case with Tribeni Hooghly and Saptagram.

There is a direct link with Prayaga UP and Tribeni Sangam Hooghly. Poet Raghunandan's 'Prayaschitta Tatwa' records: " In the **South Prayag**, its open braids adores seven villages Southern land acknowledges it as Triveni." রঘুনন্দনের প্রায়শ্চিত্ত তত্ত্বে " দক্ষিণ প্রয়াগ উন্মুক্ত বেণী সপ্ত গ্রামোখ্যা / দক্ষিণ দেশে ত্রিবেণী খ্যাতঃ। (Emphasis added).

Now, it is obvious that the Tribeni Hooghly being 'Prayag of South', 'Muktabeni Tribeni Sangam' that the snans and activities such as Kumbh happened both in Prayag UP and Prayag WB. The snans and melas held in Tribeni during the Kumbh Sankranti in both places were nothing, but Kumbh Snan and associated melas were Kumbh Mela.

A great scholar and poet of 'Chandimangal', Madhabacharya was a resident of Triveni. He introduced himself in his 'Chandimangal' like this – "It is the Saptagram among Panchgaur. In Triveni Devi Ganga flows with three streams. The great Parasharmuni lives by this bank. In yajnas and penance, he was the greatest among all. Me, the proud brother of him, Madhabacharya, With all my heart here I go with Devi Vandana."

The ghat at the confluence of the Saraswati river is known as Rishi Ghat or the ghat of Saptarishi. Also, Vashishtha, Vishwamitra, Jamadagni, Kashyap, Gautam, Varadwaj; Atri these names are engraved in the Ashram established by Abhayananda Giri, situated at Saptarishi Ghat.

So, what is Kumbh? It is based on Hindu astrology and almanac. In the case of Mahakumbh or Ardh Kumbh it has a complex combination of stellar events.

Types of Kumbh Melas

Maha Kumbh Mela: It is held only in Prayagraj. It comes every 144 years or after 12 Purna (Complete) Kumbh Mela.

Purna Kumbh Mela: It comes every 12 years. Mainly held at 4 Kumbh Mela Places in India i.e. Prayagraj, Haridwar, Nashik and Ujjain. It rotates every 12 years at these 4 places. The Purna Kumbh is organized every twelfth year when Brihaspati (Jupiter) enters the Mesha rashi (Aries) on the day of the new moon in the month of Magh.

When Brihaspati (Jupiter) enters the Kumbh Rasi (Aquarius) along with the Surya (Sun) moving into the Kumbh (Aries) constellation, the Kumbh festival is held at Haridwar.

When Brhaspati (Jupiter) moves into Simha Rashi (Leo), the Kumbh festival is held at Nasik on the banks of Godavari. Also, when Brihaspati (Jupiter), the Surya (Sun), and the Chandrima (Moon) enter Karkat (Cancer) on lunar conjunction (Amavasya), then also the Kumbh Festival is held on the banks of river Godavari.

When Brihaspati (Jupiter) moves into Simha (Leo) and the Surya (Sun) enters Mesha(Aries), the Kumbh festival is held at Ujjain.

When Brihaspati (Jupiter) enters the Mesha (Aries) constellation, and the Surya (Sun) and the Xhandrima (Moon) are in Makara (Capricorn) constellation, the Kumbh festival is held at Prayagraj on the new moon

day. Also, When the Sun is in Capricorn and Jupiter moves into Taurus, the Kumbh festival is held at Prayagraj.

Ardh Kumbh Mela: It means Half Kumbh Mela, which is held every six years in India only at two places, i.e. Haridwar and Prayagraj.

Kumbh Mela: Held at four different places and is organised by the state governments. Millions of people participate with spiritual enthusiasm.

Kumbha Sankranti is especially known for ritual baths in the rivers Ganges, Godavari, Yamuna, and other holy rivers across Bharat.

Sankranti is celebrated on sankraman day i.e. when Sun transits from one zodiac to the next. According to Surya Siddhanth, the Vedic Hindu calendar consists 12 months. There are 12 sankranti days in a year and each Sankranti day marks the beginning of the new month in Hindu Solar Calendar.

All twelve Sankranti(s) in the year are considered highly auspicious for performing ancestral rituals (Shraddha and Tarpanam) and daana-punya activities. The second to last one is called Kumbha Sankranti. In this case, when Surya (Sun) transits from Makar (Capricorn) to Kumbh rasi (Aquarius) it is called Kumbh Sankranti, and the holy bath is called by many names such as Sankranti Snan, Maghi Sankranti Snan or Kumbh Snan or Maghi Kumbh Mela. Since it is a one-day event, it is also known as 'Anu' (mini) Kumbh, which is held annually at Prayagraj in the month of Magh. Thus Tribeni Hooghly Kumbh is a 'Anu kumbh'. This Kumbh Mela is held annually at Prayagraj.

This day is the solar calendar's new month and is known as Kumbham month in Malayalam, Maasi in Tamil, and Falgun in Bengal.

For Kumbha Sankranti auspicious time starts sixteen Ghatis (1 day = 60 Ghatis) before the Sankranti moment and the time window that exists between that moment to Sankranti moment is auspicious for all Dan-Punya activities. Performing Sankramana Snan, Japa, worshipping Suryadev, pitru tarpan and shradha are the important rituals of this day.

Kumbh can be celebrated anywhere in India. This Kumbha Sankranti Snan is a smaller event, mostly one day, which happened in different parts of India and still happens in Prayag Raj called Magh Mela or Anu Kumbho.

In Tirumakudalu Narasipura, the River Kapila confluence with Cauvery and invisible Sphatika Sarovara (Gupthagamani), which belongs to the Mysuru district of Karnataka State. Thus it has been called Triveni Sangama. Seers of different mathas of the region have been successfully organising Kumbha mela in Tirumakudalu Narasipura, a confluence of the rivers Cauvery, Kapila and

There is a Kumbh called Godavari Maha Pushkaram – 'the Kumbh mela of South India' - which occurs once in twelve years in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, and for twelve days, it is celebrated in the two Telugu-speaking states.

Now about the invasions for which much destruction of temples and killings happened in the region. Different sources indicate that Tribeni-Saptagram being a major spiritual heritage city, there were numerous mandirs, and there is no trace of any old mandir in that region. Much evidence is available to show that one Zafar Ali Khan Ghazi invaded the area around 1298 CE, destroyed the local temples, and killed many Hindu pilgrims, because of which the annual Kumbh snan and mela was stopped. The current

Darga and Mosque were established after vandalizing two temples, most likely dedicated to Surya and Vishnu. Historians and archaeologists such as D. Money, H. Blochman, D. Hunter, Rakhaldas Bandopadhyay, and Jadunath Sarkar have given much of this information and evidence. However, Tribeni Kumbho Porichalona Samity has no intention of revisiting or correcting the Muslim structures. We are only interested in the spiritual and cultural celebration of Hindu festivals.

Our research team, headed by Sri Kanchan Banerjee, started researching Bengal's history a few years back. Someone sent us the paper by Alan Morinis. But the team did not rely on that as the primary source of Kumbh in Tribeni; we relied mostly on legends, traditional, and other historical sources, as noted above.

Now let us take a look at what Alan Morinis wrote in his paper (from the version we've received sometime back):

"Besides ganga sagara only Tribeni Located within bansberia town in Hooghly district, has claim to antiquity. Its name tri (three) veni (Bengali: beni) (braids-derives from its location at the confluence of three rivers: the Ganges (here called the Bhagirathi), Jumuna and the Sarasvati. **Tribeni is considered a place of great sanctity as the counterpart of one of the holiest places of pilgrimage in India. The confluence of these same three rivers at Prayaga in Allahabad, to which local residents claim it is connected by an underground tunnel. Since the Sarasvati is no longer visible at the Prayage, but is at Tribeni, priests at Tribeni drew the distinction between the former as Yuktaveni (close braid) and the latter as Muktaveni (open braid).** Tribeni was also once a great seat of sanskrit learning, but is now in decline. At the present time, the principal attraction of Tribeni is the sacred Ganges. River, as is reflected in its annual festival calendar, which celebrates every Sankranti (a Kumbha mela was held here in past).."
(emphasis added)

So, basically, if the above is authentic, Morinis is stating that Hooghly Tribeni is as important as Prayagraj. What is Prayagraj famous for? Kumbh festival. That's exactly what Tribeni Hooghly is important for – Tribeni Sangam, Kumbh Yog, and Kumbh Snan. That is the heritage and tradition of this place.

The dates of Kumbh is determined by spiritual gurus, not historians. Like next, Kumbh falls on February 13, 2024.

Every Hindu has the right to observe, organize and celebrate religious activities in their sacred places. If hypothetically we assume that there was no mela denoted as "Kumbh Mela" per se in Tribeni, so what stops them from having one since it is based on Hindu shastra and Hindu almanac? Hindus in Bengal have celebrated this event for the last two years after it was discontinued around 700 years ago (due to depopulation and extreme fear psychosis among non-Muslim pilgrims), with much enthusiasm where sadhus, sanyasis, and punyarthis came from all over India.