

Polythene Mukh Kumbh

HARIDWAR KUMBH

Kumbh is a Major pilgrimage and festival in Hinduism. It is one of the largest religious gatherings in the world. The 2021 Maha Kumbh is at **Haridwar**. According to BBC, Kumbh is the world's largest gathering program. Hence it also results where tons of plastic waste accumulates everytime. Kumbh 2019 generated more than 18000 Metric Tons of solid waste which included high levels of plastic waste. If a rough estimation is to be made pilgrims expected at Haridwar are 19.74 lakh per day, considering waste generation to be 60 g per/capita/D, the total waste estimated is 9216 T, in which plastic makes up to be roughly 4600 T.

Plastic bags are everywhere. When we look around us Plastic bags are the most common litter. Tangled in trees and fences along the road, floating in the water, lying on the ground in parks and forests, surrounding garbage bins, washed off on beaches and now for the horror, spoiling our ecosystem.

In an attempt to reduce it, to make the Maha Kumbh 2021 clean and polythene free, 'Paryavaran Committee(Paryavaran Samiti) 2021' has been formed. To make Maha Kumbh 2021, a **zero carbon footprint** zone, this committee was formed in presence of various Dignitaries. The committee has 180 members (as of 23 January,2021).

Various Sub-Committees were also formed. The main aim is to make the Kumbh polythene free by using the concept of **Eco bricks** formation. This will require pilgrims to collect single use polythene bags, plastic bottles, make Eco bricks and give them at the Canopies (200 of them) established there by various environmental NGOs. These Eco bricks can be put to use in a lot of ways, thus preventing the spread of Plastic waste and preserving the environment. One Eco brick can carry 350g plastic that can otherwise litter 100 Sq Ft area. In exchange for eco bricks, a **cloth bag** will be provided by the committee. Also, the devotees would receive 'Prasad' and Ganga Jal. These Cloth bags are being donated from people all across the country.

Worshipping of Mother Earth and living in harmony with Nature has always been an integral part of Indian Culture. No Contribution is small, Every change starts with you. Let's join Hands, and Make the Maha Kumbh 2021 Polythene free. In the words of Sitakant Mahapatra:

"They are the one to whom the earth is not something to be used, not a possession or an object for exploitation but a living entity, an object of reverence, and the relationship is

one of sacred trust and loving intimacy. For, they believe as much in celebrating one's life in this world as in remembering, adoring and celebrating the world in one's life. The sacred soil of ancestors into which one is born is thus a part of one's fundamental psychic experience of life and is a part of its spiritual dimension. The earth, the land, the village enter into and are secure in racial memory and it is only an ethical imperative to worship the Earth goddess, the Mother Earth."