President Murmu hoists the 'Dharma Dhwaja' at Ramkund, Nashik, to open the Nashik–Trimbakeshwar Simhastha Kumbh (31 Oct)

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News

On Saturday, 31 Oct 2026, President Droupadi Murmu hoisted the 'Dharma Dhwaja' (sacred flag) on a 51-ft panchadhatu (five-metal) flagpole at Ramkund on the Godavari in Nashik, formally opening the Nashik–Trimbakeshwar Simhastha Kumbh Mela. Reports said it was the first time a woman hoisted the Kumbh flag. The same day, Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis hoisted the flag at Kushavarta Tirtha in Trimbakeshwar. Mahants of the 13 akhadas took part.

Key facts

Opening	31 Oct 2026 – Ramkund, Nashik (President); Kushavarta Tirtha, Trimbakeshwar (CM Fadnavis)
Flag	51-ft five-metal pole; flag shows lion, Sun, Moon and the Amrit Kalash
River	Godavari – rises at Brahmagiri near Trimbakeshwar
Amrit Snans	2 Aug 2027, 31 Aug 2027; last – 11 Sep (Nashik), 12 Sep 2027 (Trimbakeshwar)

Close	24 July 2028 – flag lowered (about 1 year 9 months)
UNESCO	Kumbh Mela – Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, 2017

Background

- Four Kumbh sites: Haridwar (Ganga), Prayagraj (Triveni Sangam of Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati), Ujjain (Shipra) and Nashik–Trimbakeshwar (Godavari). Each hosts it about once in 12 years; tradition holds that drops of amrit fell there during the Samudra Manthan.
- Why 'Simhastha': the Nashik and Ujjain Kumbhs are held when Jupiter (Brihaspati) is in Simha (Leo), hence the name 'Simhastha'.
- Trimbakeshwar is one of the 12 Jyotirlingas, in Nashik district, Maharashtra. Nashik's Panchavati is linked to the Ramayana; Ramkund is the sacred bathing ghat there.
- UNESCO: the Kumbh Mela was inscribed on the Representative List at the 12th session of the Intangible Heritage Committee at Jeju, South Korea, in 2017. The latest Maha Kumbh was at Prayagraj in 2025.

Tamil Nadu link: the Mahamaham, called the 'Kumbh of the South', is held once in 12 years at the Mahamaham tank (about 6.2 acres) in Kumbakonam, Thanjavur district – on Masi Magham when Jupiter is in Leo. Last held on 22 Feb 2016; next in 2028. 'Masi Magham' is held every year.

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