

For CMAT Exam

FAIRS IN INDIA

A Fair is a temporary gathering of people for a variety of activities which may be religious, entertainment or commercial.

Kumbh Mela

- Largest religious gathering in the world.
- People come to take a dip in the holy river.
- Places where the Kumbh is held:
 1. Prayagraj (Uttar Pradesh) - At the confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna and the mythical Saraswati.
 2. Haridwar (Uttarakhand) - Ganga.
 3. Nashik-Trimbak - (Maharashtra) - Godavari.
 4. Ujjain (Madhya Pradesh) - Shipra.
- According to Hindu mythology, during the 'Samudra Manthan', i.e. churning of the ocean, 'Amrit', i.e. drink of immortality was produced and stored in a 'Kumbh' (pot). In the battle of the Devas and the Asuras, Lord Vishnu dropped drops of Amrit while transporting the Kumbh.
- The exact dates are determined according to the zodiac positions of the Sun, Moon and the planet Jupiter.
- At Nashik and Ujjain, if the mela is held when a planet is in Leo (Simha in Hindu astrology), it is called Simhastha Kumbh.
- In 2017, Kumbh Mela was declared by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage.

Sonepur Mela

- It is one of the largest cattle fairs in Asia.
- Held in Sonepur, Bihar at the confluence of the River Ganga and the Gandak.
- It usually takes place in November on Kartik Poonima.
- Only fair where large numbers of elephants are sold and legend says Chandragupta Maurya used to buy elephants and horses during this fair.

Pushkar Fair

- One of the largest camel and cattle fairs in the world.
- It is an annual fair in Pushkar, Rajasthan starting on the day of 'Kartik Poonima' and lasts for about a week.

- When the festival actually begins, events like camel races, moustache competitions, turban tying competitions, dancing and camel riding, etc. take centre stage.
- Popular among the foreign tourists.

Desert Festival

- This three day extravaganza takes place in Jaisalmer generally in the month of February.
- It gives the tourists a local flavour and showcases different facets of the Rajasthani culture. Tourists can enjoy colourful folk dances, trips to the sand dunes, tying competitions, camel rides, etc.
- The festival ends with a musical performance by the folk singers under the moonlit sky.

Surajkund Crafts Fair

- It is an international crafts fair held annually for a fortnight in February near Faridabad, Haryana.
- It showcases the regional as well as international crafts and cultural heritage.
- Traditional cultural programs are held and regional cuisines are served.

Gangasagar Mela

- It is conducted in the month of January-February at the mouth of the river Hooghly in West Bengal.
- A holy dip in the Ganges especially on the day of Makar Sankranti is considered very auspicious by the Hindus.
- The presence of Naga Sadhus lend a unique identity to the fair.

Goa Carnival

- Introduced by the Portuguese.
- It takes place 40 days before the Lent, a period of abstinence and spirituality.
- People wear masks and come onto the streets to party.
- The Goan streets are decorated with colourful floats and parades, live bands and dances mark the event.