

PUCL UP report on the stampede and deaths that took place in Mahakumbh, Allahabad on Mauni Amavasya 29, January

During the fair in Allahabad, which took place from January 13 to February 26, 2025 a stampede was reported at the Sangam Nose on the night between January 28 and 29. Nearly 17 hours after the incident, the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh appeared before the press and stated that a total of 30 people had died in the stampede and more than 60 were injured. However, following the incident, reports began to emerge of people going missing and that the stampede had occurred not in just one location but in three different places. The way in which relatives of the missing wandered in desperation searching for their loved ones raised suspicion that the actual number of deaths could be higher than the official figures.

For 15 to 20 days after the stampede, there was chaos outside the postmortem house of Allahabad Medical College, as people were not being allowed inside, yet they were anxious to find out what had happened to their missing relatives.

On February 19, responding to a question from the Leader of the Opposition, Mata Prasad Pandey, Chief Minister Adityanath himself acknowledged in the Assembly regarding the incident of the stampede at Jhunsi and stated that the total number of deaths from both stampedes was 37.

At the same time, government departments began suggesting terrorism and conspiracy as possible causes right after the stampede. The government formed an STF (Special Task Force) to investigate the angle of conspiracy, instructing that the matter be probed from that starting point. Even before the Kumbh began, the TV channel 'Zee News' aired a false report of a possible Naxalite attack at the fair, laying the groundwork for this narrative.

Amid this confusion, the PUCL Uttar Pradesh team decided to conduct a fact-finding investigation to determine the cause of the stampede and estimate the accurate number of fatalities.

Background

The fair held on the banks of the Sangam in Allahabad during the month of Magh is centuries old. The Magh Mela and the ritual bathing during Kumbh are part of India's centuries-old traditions. The Kumbh Mela, held every 12 years along with the annual Magh Mela, is equally ancient. This time, however, it was widely publicized that this Kumbh was occurring "after 144 years," although no factual explanation was ever provided for this claim. Nevertheless, this publicity attracted a massive number of people from across the country to Allahabad. The responsibility for the smooth organization of the Mela rested with the Government of Uttar Pradesh.

In the known history of this fair, a major stampede occurred in 1954, in which around 800 people lost their lives. Later, during the 2013 Maha Kumbh, an accident at the Allahabad railway station — caused by the collapse of an iron footbridge — led to 42 deaths and 45 injuries. Following this, Azam Khan, the Mela in-charge from the Samajwadi Party government, resigned. The current incident is the biggest since then.

Preparations for the 2025 Maha Kumbh began about a year and a half in advance, even earlier for prepping the city of Allahabad. A combined budget of ₹73,000 crore was allocated by both the central and state governments. For the first time, 2,700 AI surveillance cameras were installed, capable of scanning individual faces. Railway stations were revamped, and several special trains and buses were launched.

Alongside these preparations, widespread promotion of the Kumbh took place across cities in India to invite people to attend. The government had estimated that over 450 million devotees and more than 1.5 million foreign tourists would participate. The area of the Mela this time spanned 4,000 hectares — approximately 40 square kilometers — which is double the size of previous Kumbh Melas. The area was divided into 25 sectors, with a total of 30 pontoon bridges constructed for crossing the river. However, only 18 of these bridges were operational. It is said that prior to January 29, only 3 pontoon bridges were in use, while the rest were reserved for VIPs and administrative movement. On January 29, there were barricades on Pontoon Bridge No. 15 — a major access route from the city to the Mela grounds — which the crowd broke through.

Special arrangements were made for VIP movement, and this Mela will also be

remembered for the large number of VIPs — not just one or two, but hundreds — who bathed at the Sangam, contrary to the norms usually followed in such events.

After the Mela concluded, it was officially announced that 869 people were still missing from the Mela area.

PUCL Investigation Team

The team formed by PUCL Uttar Pradesh included National Secretary Seema Azad, State General Secretary Chittajit Mitra, Treasurer Manish Sinha, PUCL member Mridula, and independent journalist Sushil Manav. The team first visited the postmortem houses of Swarooprani Hospital and the Medical College. They toured the Mela area, took photographs of missing persons posters displayed at various locations, and contacted the phone numbers listed on them. They spoke to several eyewitnesses of the stampede at the fair. Additionally, they gathered and studied information from various news reports.

Visit to the Postmortem Houses and Findings

The PUCL team visited the postmortem houses of Swarooprani Hospital and the Medical College one week after the incident. At Swarooprani Hospital's postmortem house, the team was told that no bodies from the stampede were brought there, and that they had been sent instead to the Medical College's postmortem house. The team requested to see the death register, which was placed nearby, and upon reviewing it, they observed the following:

1. Many of the unidentified or unclaimed bodies brought in over the past week were listed as recovered from Sangam or Jhansi. From the photographs, it was clearly evident that these bodies were crushed, suggesting that the cause of death was trampling. The team tried to take pictures of the register, but they were stopped from doing so. A newly posted notice prohibited photography in the postmortem house, and two police personnel were stationed there. When team members were reviewing the register, the police stood directly behind them. Despite the restrictions, all members of the team concluded that several of the photos in the register clearly showed victims who had been crushed to death. When the team questioned the staff, they denied that these were stampede victims, claiming instead that they were unclaimed bodies found in various police station jurisdictions. However, the team assessed that bodies crushed in the stampede were deliberately split between two postmortem centers, and that there had been manipulation at multiple levels in recording the location and date of death.
2. At the Medical College postmortem house, where most of the bodies were said to be kept, a large contingent of police officers was deployed. No one was allowed to enter, and officials were not cooperating with families seeking information. No one was willing to disclose any details. On February 3, a video surfaced showing a scuffle between journalists and hospital staff when media personnel tried to enter the postmortem house. Following that incident, a heavy police presence was placed there.
3. Independent media outlet "Newslandry" reported that based on the list available to them, they saw 69 bodies at Motilal Nehru Hospital and 10 at Swarooprani Hospital. The heavy guarding of postmortem houses and refusal to allow anyone inside raised further doubts about the actual

number of fatalities.

4. Through an acquaintance, the PUCL team learned about a woman pilgrim named Sunaina Devi from Bihar, who had been missing since the incident. Her relatives were repeatedly turned away from the postmortem centers. However, when they managed to enter the facility through the intervention of an influential person, they found Sunaina Devi's body inside. This incident was later published in the *Hindustan* newspaper and aired on several local channels, confirming that people were being prevented from entering the postmortem house to conceal the presence of bodies.

Conversations with People Using the Numbers Provided

Outside the postmortem houses, numerous posters were put up displaying photos of people who had gone missing during the night of January 28–29 at the Mela. The team took photographs of these posters and contacted the phone numbers listed on them. Through these conversations, it was found that some of the missing persons had returned home, but they had received no help from the administration — instead, they managed to return only after several days through their own efforts.

Each person had their own painful story. It was ordinary people who helped them, enabling them to find their way home. Many of them were still too shaken to speak, so their relatives recounted their stories over the phone.

In other cases, some people were still waiting for their loved ones to return and told the team that they had not received any call or information from the "Lost and Found" centers during that time.

Statements from People

The Mela administration and government have officially acknowledged only one stampede incident at the Sangam Nose. However, interviews with pilgrims, shopkeepers, local residents, and even police constables, as well as footage shown on the 'Lallantop' YouTube channel, revealed that piles of footwear and clothing were also being cleared in Sector 21 of Jhunsi. Notably, some eyewitnesses interviewed by the channel were later reported to have mysteriously 'disappeared'.

On February 19, the Chief Minister also acknowledged the stampede in Jhunsi during a session of the Assembly, but stated that only seven people had died.

According to a report by the Deccan Herald, a third stampede incident occurred on GT Road in Sector 10, where at least three women reportedly died while the path was being cleared for a Mahamandaleshwar (a senior spiritual leader). However, the PUCL team was unable to verify this claim.

The team could only find one eyewitness to the stampede at Sangam Nose. This witness, named Babita, resides in Shivkuti. She was heading towards the Sangam for a holy dip during the night of January 28–29 when the stampede occurred. She told the team that around 2:00 AM, just as she was about to reach the Sangam Nose, she saw a panic-stricken crowd running toward her. Some people had bloodstains on their clothes, and a man was running while shouting, "Don't go there — people are dying!"

Babita, who had come with her husband for the ritual bath, immediately turned toward a nearby ghat, away from the Sangam Nose. To do this, she had to climb over bamboo barricades, as everyone fleeing the scene was doing the same. She managed to take a dip but was still unaware of the full extent of what had happened. However, during the entire time she was there, ambulance sirens could be heard constantly. She noted that thousands of people were still gathered at the Sangam, and she quickly bathed and returned.

Apart from Babita, the team did not find any other eyewitnesses to the Sangam stampede, but they did gather several statements broadcast in the media that confirmed the stampede, and these accounts are now publicly available.

Video Links: <https://youtu.be/qUAMehImH9A?si=-Jr9Vm21xLseJRj5>

<https://youtu.be/a2l4A0XS2ng?si=M1ufQ7uOB4xqosVI>

None of the videos mentioned any official death toll; they only shared the emotional accounts of those who managed to escape and the pain of getting separated from their loved ones.

However, the team was able to locate 13 eyewitnesses of the stampede that occurred in Jhunsi. It took a considerable amount of time and effort to find these witnesses, and they were only found several days after the incident.

Eyewitnesses of the Jhunsi Stampede

We found a total of 13 eyewitnesses to the stampede that occurred in Jhunsi. Among them, ten were women, all residents of Fatehpur Bichhua locality in Allahabad. We interviewed Shobha Yadav, Rampyari, Deepali Yadav, Anita, Shweta Yadav, Akanksha Rai, Ranjit Yadav, and Sabaloo Yadav. Some of them also gave us permission to take their photographs.



Pic: Witnesses of stampede in Jhunsi

When asked about the government's denial of the stampede, the women became emotional and outspoken. They explained that a group of ten women and some children had left for the Sangam around 2 AM. They reached Sector 21 via Pontoon Bridge No. 1, took a ritual bath at the Sangam, and were on their way back when they got caught in the stampede.

According to them, as they approached the bridge again, police officers were pushing people back. From both the Nagvasuki side and the Sangam side, crowds were moving simultaneously. One of the pontoon bridges leading to the Sangam had been closed because religious processions (Akhadas) were about to take place. People were being redirected, but they weren't listening. To control the crowd, police began using batons, which triggered panic and the stampede began.

In the middle of the chaos, all the lights went out. The crowd was so dense that there was no chance to even take out a phone to use as a flashlight. People were falling on top of each other. The women had been holding each other's hands tightly, but now they were being forced to let go. They yelled to one another to entrust the children and the elderly to whoever was nearby, and let go of each other's hands to avoid being crushed or falling down. They called out to each other, saying, "Everyone get home however you can — if we try to stay together, we'll die."

They all got separated. Their slippers had come off, and in an attempt to save themselves, people were removing sweaters, jackets, scarves, and even sarees that were getting snagged in the crowd. All anyone could think of was survival.

They said the ones who fell the most were women wearing ghagras (long skirts, often worn by Rajasthani women). Many children got separated from their parents and were either trampled or went missing. These eyewitnesses saw many dead bodies, and said the faces of the deceased still haunted them. As they recounted the incident, they were visibly shaken and covered in goosebumps.

Their throats were damaged from screaming and the crushing heat and suffocation. Everyone was extremely thirsty and there was no water. People were

pleading with each other for water, but there were no taps or drinking facilities nearby. Some were willing to pay ₹200–300 for water, but none was available. Those who could manage were drinking and sharing water from the Sangam river, though it was insufficient in such a large crowd.

They said the police also fled to save their own lives. Some officers, while escaping the crowd, helped Rekha Yadav get out and somehow reach Jhunsi Bridge, which was also overcrowded.

Anita injured her foot — her toenail was torn off and she bled — yet she had to walk barefoot. At the Jhunsi bridge, she tied a polythene bag around her foot and made it home.

Around 65-year-old Shobha Yadav got separated from her group and daughter. She is a heart patient, and her daughter shielded her with outstretched arms to prevent her from falling. They eventually found a way out through a filthy open drain. In desperation to survive, they — along with others — crossed through the putrid, overflowing drain, and were the last to make it home. Everyone feared the worst. Shobha Yadav thought that it was the last day of her life, but she managed to return with her daughter by 4 PM.

When she arrived, there was a crowd gathered at her door fearing she hadn't survived. Once she got home, all the women wept together for a long time. Shobha later said the stench of the drain still lingers in her mind, and she's been unable to eat properly since. Rekha's throat hadn't healed even after a month, and everyone's bodies ached for weeks.

Akanksha Rai, who had come with her husband (a soldier) and two-year-old child, shared a similar account. She described how her baby was suffocating and crying loudly during the stampede, and she barely managed to save him. Her eyes welled up in fear again as she recounted it.

Rekha Yadav's male relatives, who hadn't gone for the bath, began searching for their family early that morning. Sabaloo Yadav and Ranjit Yadav shared their side. They said they received a panicked call from a relative around dawn, telling them that many people had died and no one was able to reach the women from their family. They tried calling everyone but none of the phones were working. Later, they learned that the administration had jammed mobile signals after the Sangam stampede to prevent news from spreading.

They then rode motorcycles into the Mela area and went to the Lost and Found center, which was already overwhelmed with people looking for their relatives. Everyone was being told to write names and details on paper, but no one had pen and paper. Ranjit and Sabaloo helped several people by tearing pages from their diary and writing down names.

They kept trying their relatives' phones and roamed around the Sangam area. Around 8 AM, they also visited the Mela hospital, where 8–10 dead bodies were lying around. Finally, around 9 AM, one phone call got through, and a relative informed them that everyone was safe. A little later, more family members arrived.

Sabaloo, feeling relieved, took five ritual dips in the Sangam to thank the divine. He said that with every dip, numerous sandals floated past his head, giving him a sense of how devastating the stampede had been. Even near the ghats, there were piles of abandoned footwear scattered everywhere.

Experiences of Journalists Covering the Mahakumbh

In light of the mismanagement during the Kumbh and the stampede incident, journalist Sushil Manav, a member of the PUCL team, spoke with several journalists including Kshitijkant (Four PM), Vivek Yadav (OBC Times), J.P. Singh (Daily News Activist), and K.K. Pandey (Samkaleen Janmat) among others. Most of them shared similar opinions, attributing the stampede to the following factors:

1. There were no separate entry and exit routes for reaching the bathing ghats. Because of this, people moving in opposite directions collided, resulting in pushing, jostling, and eventually a stampede.
2. If separate routes weren't possible, a central divider using bamboo could have been installed to separate incoming and outgoing foot traffic. This would have eased movement and prevented head-on crowd flow.
3. On January 29 (Mauni Amavasya), the government and Mela administration had anticipated about 1 million pilgrims for the holy dip. Even so, most pontoon bridges—constructed specifically for the Mela—were not opened, which is a baffling decision.

4. Experienced police and administrative officers were sidelined, and inexperienced officers were assigned the task of managing the Mela, most of whom were unaware of how to handle such massive crowds.
5. The officials in charge were more focused on VIP infrastructure, VIP movements, and media management. For crowd control and monitoring, they were over-reliant on drone cameras and CCTV, while the number of on-ground police officers was highly inadequate for handling the enormous crowd.
6. Due to the continuous influx of VIPs into the Mela, the police administration's focus shifted entirely from the public to the government. On January 27, just two days before Mauni Amavasya, the Union Home Minister was present in the Mela area the entire day. On January 28, the Chief Minister and other VIPs were also present. The top brass of the police was engaged in servicing VIPs till the last moment, leaving little to no time for crowd management preparations.
7. In Sector 21 of Jhunsi, where the stampede occurred, a community kitchen (bhandara) was being held at the Das Dharm Camp, which increased crowd pressure in the exit route. Eyewitnesses reported that people were entering the camp, while the saints inside were pushing them back out. Such events should not have been allowed on exit routes during high-traffic days.
8. Several akhadas (monastic orders) in the Mela area were offering VIP services, essentially acting like tour and travel operators. Their clients were tech professionals, businessmen, contractors, and middlemen. Near Juna Akhada in Jhunsi-Chatnag, a tent city with 150 illegal cottages called "Justa Camp" was set up for these people. Alongside vehicles with VIP passes, akhada vehicles were also allowed access to the Sangam, and were being used to shuttle VIP guests back and forth.
9. Traffic outside the Mela area in the city was poorly managed, leaving many people stranded near or around the fairgrounds. Had the city traffic been better handled, more people could have left the Mela area and headed home.

10. The government and Mela officials were fixated on chasing numerical records. Whether it was the target of 66 crore people bathing over 45 days, 10 crore on Mauni Amavasya, 4 crore on Makar Sankranti, 15,000 sanitation workers in one spot to set a cleaning record, or even the absurd idea of a 300-kilometer traffic jam as a "world record" – there was a mania. This obsession was psychologically reinforced through media hype, especially using the phrase "Kumbh after 144 years" to manipulate people into believing they were part of something historic. The public was essentially reduced to a statistic in a game of numbers.

News Reports from Newspapers:

1. According to the newspaper *Dainik Jagran*, a total of 185 fire incidents occurred during the 45-day-long world-famous Mahakumbh Mela, but swift action prevented them from spreading. Among these, 24 were major fire accidents, which were brought under control quickly by joint efforts of the fire department and police. One such fire broke out at the Gita Press tent from Gorakhpur.

Link: [Jagran article](#)

2. Even those who survived the stampede have suffered mental trauma. A woman who returned from the Kumbh wakes up startled in the middle of the night due to distress.

Link: [Bhaskar article](#)

3. 15 people from Bihar reportedly died, but many of them were not included in the official death count. The families were given ₹15,000 and sent back from Prayagraj. The body of 75-year-old Kari Mandal from Darbhanga was found labeled with the number 38.

Link: [Bhaskar article](#)

4. As of April 7, 2025, *Hindustan* newspaper reported that the Prayagraj Municipal Corporation had begun issuing death certificates for those who died in the Kumbh stampede. 50 certificates had been issued, out of which

35 were from the Jhunsi zone, the area worst affected.

Link: [Live Hindustan article](#)

5. After the Mela ended, it was revealed that 869 people registered with the Lost and Found center were still missing, and their whereabouts remain unknown.

Link: [Bhaskar article](#)

6. The most heartbreaking aspect was that the stampede in Jhunsi Sector was denied by the DIG and the administration, despite footage showing JCBs and tractors clearing debris from the site, which was also aired by the Lallantop YouTube channel.

Video link: [Lallantop video](#)

7. News reports mentioned that several cars from Karnataka and other states were found abandoned near the Mela grounds. There was no information about whether the owners had died or gone missing.

Link: [Live Hindustan article](#)

Our Conclusion

After reviewing all these facts, the PUCL team reached the following conclusions:

Causes of the Stampede:

The 2025 Mahakumbh Mela displayed clear signs of administrative mismanagement in several key areas:

1. Historical Lessons Ignored:

A major stampede in the 1954 Allahabad Kumbh claimed 800 lives. The then-government, treating it as a warning, introduced guidelines for future fairs and mass gatherings. Two of the most critical were:

- Leave as much open space in the Mela area as possible.
- Restrict VIP movement in the Mela.

Both these important lessons were blatantly ignored in this year's

Kumbh.

2. Reduction of Open Space:

While Allahabad has broad banks along the Ganga and Yamuna, the actual confluence point (Sangam Nose) is a very narrow area, unsuitable for large crowds. In previous Kumbhs, access to the Sangam was tightly controlled, with people moved gradually via winding open spaces and resting grounds like Parade Ground.

This time, however:

- Open spaces were occupied with tent cities and market stalls to attract VIPs and commercial footfall.
- Even the space in front of the important Leete Hanuman temple was taken up by a new “Hanuman Corridor,” further reducing the open area.
- A large decorative gate was also constructed to access the Akshayavat-Patalpuri complex inside Akbar’s Fort, and a police post was built nearby, narrowing the area further and damaging the historic aesthetics.
- These constructions disrupted the Ganga’s natural floodplain, which traditionally extends up to the Hanuman temple every September. The area was also where the RPF (Railway Protection Force) was posted, and the stampede occurred nearby.

3. In essence, a highly restricted area was used to attract record crowds, further choked by lavish tents and structures – all to set a world record for attendance.

4. VIP Priority Over Public Safety:

Several pontoon bridges were deliberately kept closed and reserved for VIP movement, even though previous commissions post-1954 had clearly recommended banning VIPs from the fair due to:

- Administrative diversion: Large portions of the staff focused on VIP

protocol instead of crowd control.

- Crowd chaos: People rush to see VIPs, destabilizing arrangements. The 2025 Kumbh was designed with VIPs in mind.
- Home Minister Amit Shah visited two days before the main bathing day.
- The Chief Minister visited the Mela 12 times in 1.5 months, and a significant part of the police force was constantly deployed for their security.
- Out of 30 pontoon bridges, only 2 were for the general public. At least one was reserved for administrative vehicles, leaving 24–25 bridges effectively unavailable to ordinary pilgrims.

5. Deliberate Bridge Closures:

Of the 30 pontoon bridges, many were closed without explanation just before January 29, causing mass congregation on only 2–4 bridges.

- A "one-way traffic" system near Sangam Nose increased risk.
- This appears to have been engineered for visual effect, to produce video footage of massive crowds and claim record-breaking attendance.

6. Lights Cut and Phones Jammed During Stampede:

- All eyewitnesses from Jhunsi reported that lights were shut off and mobile signals jammed during the stampede.
- Even if intended to prevent panic, no alternative arrangements were in place, worsening the tragedy.
- This suggests that once the Sangam-side stampede began, authorities began diverting people to Jhunsi, triggering a second stampede.

- Eyewitnesses said: “If the government could, they’d remove our eyes and memories too. But this incident is etched into our minds forever and will haunt us till death.”

7. Untrained & Outsider Police Force:

- Most officers deployed during the Kumbh were not local, unfamiliar with Allahabad’s geography.
- No training was provided beforehand.
- Many police personnel, speaking anonymously, told PUCL they were deeply unhappy and felt helpless and pressured.

8. Failure of 2700 Surveillance Cameras:

- Despite the government’s claim of AI-based 2700-camera monitoring, they failed to detect and control crowd bottlenecks.
- Officers manning these feeds failed to act on real-time crowd surges, proving it was more about creating crowd data for record-setting, not safety.

9. "Kumbh After 144 Years" Media Manipulation:

- The government ran an aggressive campaign promoting this Kumbh as a “once in 144 years” event, without any factual basis, to stir religious sentiment and draw record attendance.
- Religious and political groups were reportedly bringing people in truckloads, exceeding the region’s capacity.
- The very people who were invited in huge numbers were the ones who suffered the most.

10. Voices of the Missing Ignored:

- Social media was flooded with distress videos and stories of people searching for loved ones.
- People from Bihar, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Haryana, etc., walked kilometers between Lost & Found centers, hospitals, and morgues — often without help.
- Officials often refused to give clear information, and in some cases evicted people demanding answers — especially when VIPs like the Prime Minister and Vice President arrived with fanfare.

11.Criminalizing Dissent:

- Despite violating Kumbh guidelines, the UP Chief Minister claimed critics of the Mela—journalists, opposition leaders, activists—were “anti-Sanatan Dharma”.
- He also hinted at a conspiracy, claiming the police were investigating this angle.
- Media like Zee News had already run false stories linking the event to Naxals.
- These statements appear aimed at demonizing anyone demanding accountability, risking targeted accusations against civil society and further communalizing public discourse.

11.Public Compassion vs Official Apathy:

- Despite the hate-driven rhetoric, ordinary citizens, university students, mosques, churches, and minority communities in Allahabad opened their doors to help pilgrims in distress.
- This solidarity from civil society was a bright spot amid the government’s cold indifference.

12. Institutional Silence:

- The Supreme Court refused to intervene to provide relief to stampede victims' families.
- The Human Rights Commission also remained silent, despite the scale of the tragedy.

Number of Deaths

1. While addressing the media on the evening of January 29 at 7 PM, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath stated that 30 people had died and 60 were injured in the stampede.

However, eyewitnesses claim the actual number was much higher, though no one could provide an exact figure.

People were not allowed inside the postmortem house.

Meanwhile, NewsLaundry, in its report, stated that its journalists personally saw a body labeled as number 79.

The government never denied or refuted this report.

 [NewsLaundry report](#)

2. On February 19, responding to a question raised by the Leader of the Opposition, CM Adityanath reported in the legislative assembly that the total death toll was 37.
3. On a TV news channel, an ambulance driver revealed that he had carried 10 dead bodies per trip and made approximately 10 such trips, implying around 100 deaths.
4. Eyewitnesses of the Jhunsi stampede could not specify a number, but they confirmed seeing many people fall and die at the scene.
In a news report aired by Lallantop, JCBs were seen removing massive quantities of slippers, clothing, and bags, indicating that the scale of the stampede was far larger, and so was the likely death toll.

5. After the Mela concluded, official figures showed that 869 people were still registered as missing in the Lost and Found system.

This is a huge number, and the continued lack of information about them raises serious doubts about the true death toll.

6. A news report published in *Hindustan* on April 7, 2025, stated that the Prayagraj Municipal Corporation had begun issuing death certificates for victims of the Kumbh stampede.

So far, 50 certificates had been issued, with 34 from the Jhunsi zone—the worst affected area.

 [Hindustan article](#)

7. At Swarooprani Postmortem House, our team observed photos in the register of unidentified, crushed bodies recovered from Sangam and Jhunsi.

These strongly indicate that the death count is higher than officially reported and may have been concealed.

PUCL Uttar Pradesh Demands Based on These Findings

Based on the findings and evidence presented in this report, People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), Uttar Pradesh makes the following demands:

1. From the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA):

PUCL calls on the NDMA, a statutory body established under the Disaster Management Act, 2005 and chaired by the Prime Minister, to publicly respond to the stampede incident.

Since this matter directly concerns citizen safety, NDMA must also publicly disclose any advice or instructions it gave to the Uttar Pradesh state administration following the stampede, to prevent further such disasters during the remaining weeks of the Mahakumbh Mela.

2. From the Government of Uttar Pradesh:

The UP government must immediately release a comprehensive document disclosing the following:

- a. Complete details of all identified and unidentified deceased registered between January 29 and February 1, 2025, across morgues, hospitals, and police stations in Allahabad.
 - b. A list of all people treated and discharged from hospitals near the site of the stampede between January 29 and the end of the Mela.
 - c. A list of all persons reported missing by their families or acquaintances in the Kumbh Mela area during that same time period.
 - d. The government must publicly display photos of unidentified deceased and injured persons via government offices, police stations, and newspapers.
-

3. From the Government of India:

- a. Investigate the breach of official Kumbh guidelines, and hold accountable those responsible at all levels for criminal negligence, as the incident amounts to mass culpable homicide.
 - b. Through designated nodal officers, the central government must coordinate with other state governments to support victims from outside Uttar Pradesh, ensuring they receive death certificates and are not left wandering helplessly in Allahabad in search of their loved ones.
 - c. A fair and consistent compensation policy must be developed for the families of those who died or were injured in the stampede on January 29, 2025.
-

4. Regarding the Judicial Inquiry Commission (Already Appointed by UP Govt):

Even though a judicial commission has already been appointed, the following measures must be ensured:

- a. The commission must immediately secure all CCTV footage, medical and police records, and other crucial evidence from January 29 to February 1, 2025, and conduct a thorough investigation.
- b. The commission must be fully accessible and function independently of the state and central governments, political parties, police, and local administration. Its structure must be reviewed accordingly.
The commission must ensure reassignment of duties for all administrative and police officers involved in managing the Mela during the said period, to prevent them from tampering with evidence.
- c. The commission should issue a public appeal or conduct public hearings inviting citizens to submit personal photographs, videos, testimonies, or any other relevant information, without fear of retaliation.
- d. It must guarantee the safety and confidentiality of all witnesses.
- e. The commission should conduct daily hearings to expedite the investigation process.
- f. The government must provide psychological counseling to those who survived the stampede but continue to suffer from anxiety, sleeplessness, and trauma, especially those who witnessed numerous deaths or lost loved ones.