

KANWAD MELA 2026

—卐—
A Journey of Service,
Sadhana and Shiva Bhakti





KANWAD MELA MEDICAL, HYGIENE AND ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS CAMP



INTRODUCTION

The Kanwad Yatra is one of India's most sacred pilgrimages, bringing millions of devotees together in a journey of faith and devotion to Lord Shiva. Carrying holy Gangajal over long distances, Kanwariyas undertake a physically demanding journey that requires endurance, strength and resilience. Recognising the physical challenges associated with the pilgrimage, a **Free Medical & Seva Initiative** was organised during Kanwad Mela 2026 at Rajaji National Park, Swargashram, Rishikesh in the area beingd Parmarth Niketan Ashram, offering essential healthcare and support to devotees along their sacred path in this eco sensitive area.

The initiative was made possible through the collective and complementary efforts of Parmarth Niketan, Divine Shakti Foundation (DSF), Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (GIWA) and

Ganga Action Parivar. Gratitude goes to Bajaj General provided valuable support for the medical services, Care Nursing College contributed dedicated student volunteers and nursing support, while government doctors from Pauri Garhwal brought their professional medical expertise to the community. With the dedicated participation of the Parmarth Niketan seva team, the collaboration enabled the delivery of accessible and compassionate healthcare to the community, reflecting the a shared commitment to the wellbeing of all.



PUJYA SWAMIJI'S VISIONARY LEADERSHIP

It was through the visionary leadership of **HH Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji** that this effort received important spiritual guidance and inspiration. He called upon pilgrims and the wider community to embrace a positive vision for the Mela, one rooted in its original spirit of faith, tapasya, seva and reverence for the sacred landscape, rather than in its increasingly common associations with trash, pollution, excessive noise and substance abuse. Through both on-ground messaging and public discourse, Parmarth Niketan sought to inspire a more conscious, responsible and environmentally sensitive Kanwad Mela.

RECLAIMING THE SPIRIT OF KANWAD MELA - A MESSAGE FROM PUJYA SWAMIJI

Dear Divine Souls,

The Kanwad Yatra is a sacred journey of discipline, devotion, service and values, and an opportunity to bring Shivatva into our lives. The millions of devotees who undertake this journey, particularly our youth, carry with them the strength and spirit of Indian culture. When their journey is guided by discipline, cleanliness, compassion, environmental protection and service, the Kanwad Yatra can become not only a spiritual pilgrimage, but a powerful movement for individual transformation and national consciousness.



HH PUJYA SWAMI CHIDANAND SARASWATI

Shiva means well-being. When we alleviate suffering, bring a smile to someone's face, or provide health, support and dignity to someone in need, we are truly worshipping Shiva. Lord Shiva's life teaches us sacrifice, equality, compassion and public welfare. Therefore, our worship must not remain limited to ritual, but must be reflected in the way we care for one another and for the world around us.

As we offer the sacred waters of Mother Ganga in Jalabhishek, let us also remember our responsibility towards Mother Earth. Let us conserve water, plant trees, keep our pilgrimage routes and water sources clean, minimise waste and single-use plastic, and protect the sacred environment through which we travel. May every Kanwariya undertake a safe, healthy and environmentally responsible journey, carrying not only the sacred waters of Ganga, but also a commitment to seva, cleanliness, compassion and the welfare of all.

In service of God and humanity,

Swami Chidanand Saraswati



INAUGURATION & LAUNCH OF THE INITIATIVE

As Uttarakhand welcomed thousands of Kanwad pilgrims and Shiva devotees during the sacred month of Shravan, Parmarth Niketan sought to reconnect the pilgrimage with its deeper spirit of devotion, discipline, seva and reverence for Maa Ganga and the natural world.

On July 30, on Guru Purnima, in the presence of Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, the 14th **Ganga Awareness and Ganga Aarti Training Workshop** completed at Parmarth Niketan, bringing together over 30 priests and participants from different parts of India. The training provided an important platform to deepen understanding of Ganga Aarti as both a sacred practice and a means of raising awareness for the protection of the Ganga and the environment, with participants carrying these values and messages back to the ghats and pilgrimage centres where they serve—many of which also receive large numbers of Kanwadiyas during the Kanwad Mela.

Pujya Swamiji reminded Kanwad pilgrims that worship of Shiva must also become a commitment to protecting Maa Ganga and Mother Earth, that Shravan is a time not only for Shiva Abhishek, but also for Dhara Abhishek, honouring and nurturing the Earth. He called upon devotees to make cleanliness, compassion and seva part of their spiritual practice, and upon priests and spiritual leaders to become ambassadors of this consciousness. In this way, the Ganga Aarti training became part of the larger Kanwad vision: to transform pilgrimage into a conscious expression of devotion, where Ganga worship becomes Ganga protection, and every devotee becomes a sevak and protector of Maa Ganga and the sacred natural world.

The initiative was also launched in the presence of, the **District Magistrate and Sub-District Magistrates of Pauri Garhwal**, government health officials and other participating representatives.

The launch reflected a broader vision of **Green Pilgrimage**, bringing together **health, hygiene, cleanliness, water conservation and environmental responsibility**. In the presence of Pujya Swamiji and government officials, leaders and participants pledged to work towards a garbage-free Neelkanth, save water, plant trees and support a cleaner pilgrimage route.





MEDICAL CAMP & HEALTHCARE SERVICES

The medical team provided consultations and essential medicines for common health concerns encountered during the Yatra. Basic treatment was provided free of cost, enabling devotees to receive immediate medical attention without the added burden of healthcare expenses.

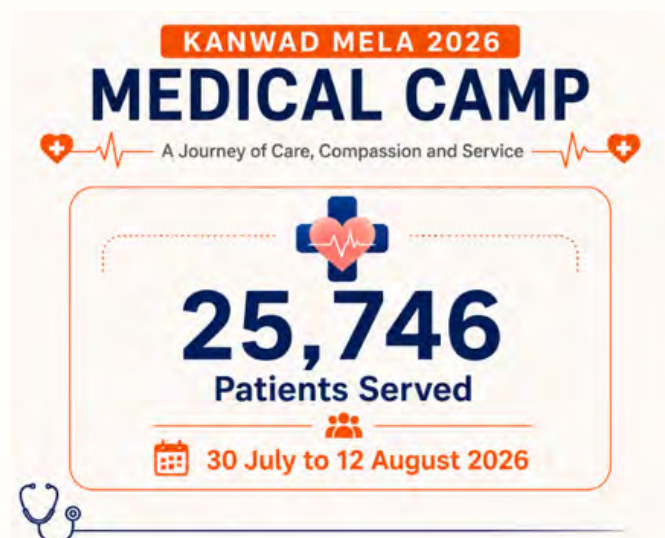
From **30 July to 12 August 2026**, a total of 25,746 patients received medical assistance at the camp.

The medical facility served as an important point of primary care for pilgrims travelling through the area, helping address health concerns promptly and allowing devotees to continue their sacred journey with greater safety and comfort.

General Common Illnesses treated included: Cold, Cough, Fever, Cuts, Burns, and Skin Allergies, Blood Sugar and Blood Pressure, Urinary Tract Infections, Boils and Pimples, Dehydration, Vomiting, and Diarrhea, Dizziness and Fatigue, Foot Blisters from Walking, Gastric Issues and Indigestion.

For patients whose conditions required advanced evaluation or specialised treatment, appropriate referrals were made to AIIMS. Ambulance support was also available to facilitate emergency transportation whenever necessary.

Through this combination of primary medical care, essential medicines, referral services and emergency transportation, the camp provided a dependable healthcare resource for Kanwariyas throughout the Yatra.





OUR VOLUNTEERS

The success of the initiative was strengthened by a dedicated team of doctors, nurses and volunteers who served pilgrims throughout the camp. The Care Nursing College team comprised **3 doctors, 19 nurses and 4 volunteers**, while **DSF contributed 4 volunteers**. The Parmarth Niketan team provided additional support in facilitating the overall seva activities.

Working in coordination with the Government Medical Team, Pauri Garhwal, and other partners, the teams remained available throughout the service hours of 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM to respond to the needs of pilgrims. Their collective presence ensured that devotees could access timely healthcare, guidance and practical support during one of the most demanding stages of their pilgrimage.

ESSENTIAL MEDICINES & PATIENT CARE

Following medical consultation, patients were provided with basic and essential medicines according to their individual requirements.

The focus remained on prompt assessment, appropriate treatment and clear guidance, enabling pilgrims to manage their health concerns safely while continuing their journey.

By combining medical consultation, essential medication and referral support, the camp provided both immediate healthcare assistance and a pathway to higher medical services when required.

The initiative ensured that devotees could receive care at the point of need while undertaking one of the most physically demanding stages of their pilgrimage.





JAL MANDIR - CLEAN DRINKING WATER SEVA

Adequate hydration is essential for pilgrims undertaking long hours of walking, particularly during the physically intensive Kanwad Yatra.

As part of the initiative, regular water filling was undertaken for the Jal Mandir tanks serving devotees along the route. During the 14-day period, a total of 5,34,500 litres of clean drinking water were supplied.

The Jal Mandirs also served as an opportunity to communicate an important message about the value of water, with awareness messaging emphasising that water is our future.

Through the provision of drinking water alongside conservation messaging, the initiative sought to meet an immediate need while also encouraging pilgrims to reflect on the importance of protecting and conserving this precious resource.



GREEN PILGRIMAGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

The 2026 initiative reflected a broader vision of a Green Pilgrimage, volunteers and saints engaged with pilgrims along the Yatra with messages promoting green pilgrimage, cleanliness, responsible waste management and care for the natural environment.

Pilgrims were sensitised to the importance of keeping the pilgrimage site and route clean; save water; plant more trees; reduce waste; and protect the sacred natural environment. Pujya Swamiji also encouraged that Every devotee should make the Yatra a green journey by planting at least one tree or taking a resolution to protect the plants and to not throw any kind of garbage, puja material or plastic in Maa Ganga.

The campaign sought to connect devotion with action, encouraging pilgrims to understand that protecting Mother Ganga and the surrounding environment is part of respecting the sacredness of the Yatra.



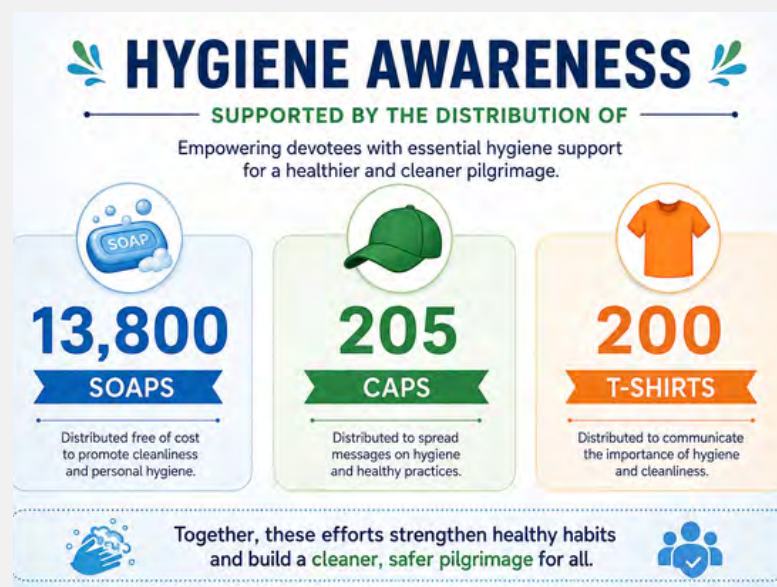
HYGIENE & ENVIRONMENT AWARENESS

Hygiene awareness was strengthened through sensitisation on handwashing and cleanliness, together with the distribution of **13,800 soaps**, while sharing cleanliness messages.

The hygiene awareness efforts focused on practical, everyday hygiene and the importance of cleanliness and hand hygiene during the yatra.

Beyond hygiene, the initiative promoted a wider Green Pilgrimage vision. Volunteers engaged pilgrims on responsible waste management, water conservation and tree plantation. Cloth bags were initially given with pilgrims asked to actively collect waste along the pilgrimage route. Those returning with full bags were recognised with a T-shirt and cap, encouraging direct participation in keeping the route clean. **205 caps and 200 T-shirts** were ultimately given through this innovative approach.

The camp area also provided a dedicated resting space for Kanwariyas, reflecting the spirit of Atithi Devo Bhava and extending care beyond medical treatment in which messages were also shared.



PLEDGES

Pilgrims were encouraged to take pledges to keep the pilgrimage route clean, save water and plant more trees.

The pledge provided an opportunity for devotees to make a personal commitment to environmental responsibility while undertaking their spiritual journey.

The collective message was that the pilgrimage should not only be a journey of devotion, but also a journey of responsibility, with every devotee playing a role in maintaining the cleanliness and sanctity of the route.

At the launch also, participating leaders and stakeholders also pledged to work towards a garbage-free Neelkanth, conserve water and support tree planting.







SPIRITUAL ESSENCE OF THE KANWAD MELA

From Sadhana to Seva, From Worship to Welfare

The Kanwad Mela brought together the spirit of sadhana, seva and devotion to Mahadev and Maa Ganga with a deeper commitment to environmental responsibility. Alongside healthcare, hygiene and environmental service, the Mela was also an occasion for prayer and spiritual practice.

In the holy presence of Pujya Swamiji, the Rishikumars of Parmarth Gurukul performed Rudrabhishek of Lord Shiva according to Vedic tradition, accompanied by Vishwa Shanti Yagna, Vedic chanting, Shri Rudram and Mahamrityunjay Mantras, with prayers for world peace, environmental protection and the welfare of all beings.

Reflecting on Shravan and the Kanwad Yatra, Pujya Swamiji described this sacred period as a time of self-purification, reflection and awakening, reminding devotees that the deeper purpose of worship is to awaken the Shiva principle within:

“Shravan is a journey from mauna (sacred silence) to Mahadev, from the self to Shiva.”

Pujya Swamiji further emphasised that the values represented by Lord Shiva must find expression in our lives. Sacrifice, compassion, patience, balance and harmony are not only ideals to be revered, but principles to be practised through service to others and care for the natural world.





दैनिक जागरण



दैनिक जागरण



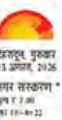
बाघखाला में परमार्थ निकेतन का कांवड़ सेवा अभियान शुरू



शिविर में स्वास्थ्य उपचार करते स्वास्थ्य कर्मी

जागरण संवाददाता, ऋषिकेश: राजजी टाइम्स रिजर्व पार्क अंतर्गत बाघखाला नैलकंठ पैदल मार्ग पर परमार्थ निकेतन ने कांवड़ सेवा अभियान शुरू किया। यह अभियान चिकित्सा सहायता, स्वास्थ्य, स्वच्छता, पर्यावरण संरक्षण और मानवीय मूल्यों का व्यापक जनजागरण अभियान है।

पारम्परिक उपचार, स्वास्थ्य परामर्श, आवश्यक दवाइयाँ उपलब्ध कराई जा रही है। टीम सुबह से शाम सात बजे तक शिवभक्तों की सेवा करती है। सेवा शिविर में आने वाले कई शिवभक्त पैदल यात्रा के दौरान थकान, पैरों में सूजन, छाले, मांस पेशियों में दर्द, निजलीकरण और मौसम जनित स्वास्थ्य समस्याओं से पीड़ित होते हैं। स्वामी चिदानंद ने कहा कि कांवड़ यात्रा अनुशासन, सेवा और संस्कारों की यात्रा है। कांवड़ यात्रा, शिवत्व को जीवन में धारण करने की साधन है।



दैनिक जागरण



दैनिक जागरण



हरियाली अमावस्या पर पौधारोपण करने का संकल्प

जागरण संवाददाता, ऋषिकेश: हरियाली अमावस्या के अवसर पर परमार्थ निकेतन में प्रकृति संरक्षण, पौधारोपण और पर्यावरणीय जागरूकता कार्यक्रम का आयोजन किया गया। इस कार्यक्रम में आश्रम में सभी से आग्रह किया कि इस पर्व को केवल पूजा और परंपरा के रूप में नहीं, बल्कि धरती के प्रति अपने कर्तव्यों के निर्वाह का अवसर मानें।

परमार्थ निकेतन के अध्यक्ष स्वामी चिदानंद सरस्वती ने कहा कि भारतीय संस्कृति ने सदैव प्रकृति को पूजनीय माना है। वृक्ष हमारे जीवनदाता हैं, नदियां जीवनदायिनी हैं, नदियां जीवनदायिनी शक्ति हैं और पर्वत हमारी आध्यात्मिक चेतना

आंखों जैसे वृक्षों को धार्मिक और आध्यात्मिक महत्व दिया गया है। हरियाली अमावस्या का पर्व हमें यह संदेश देता है कि पर्यावरण संरक्षण हमारा व्यक्तिगत धर्म और सामाजिक कर्तव्य है। हम अपने घरों, विद्यालयों, कार्यलयों और आसपास के क्षेत्रों में पौधे लगाकर, जल का संरक्षण करके, सिंगल यूज प्लास्टिक का कम उपयोग करके और कचरे का उचित प्रबंधन करके पर्यावरण संरक्षण में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभा सकते हैं। प्रकृति को नमन करें, धरती माँ के प्रति कृतज्ञता व्यक्त करें और धरती को हरा-भरा बनाए रखने का संकल्प लें।



बुधवार को ऋषिकेश में पौधारोपण करते स्वामी चिदानंद सरस्वती



दैनिक जागरण



दैनिक जागरण



लोक कल्याण को समर्पित है शिवरात्रि : स्वामी चिदानंद

जागरण संवाददाता, ऋषिकेश: सावन मास की शिवरात्रि पर परमार्थ निकेतन आश्रम में ऋषिकुमारों की ओर से रुद्राभिषेक और पूजन किया गया, वहीं दूसरी ओर परमार्थ निकेतन की ओर से बाघखाला में आयोजित चिकित्सा शिविर में शिवभक्तों और श्रद्धालुओं की भीड़ उमड़ी।

परमार्थ निकेतन के अध्यक्ष स्वामी चिदानंद ने कहा कि शिवरात्रि, चेतना के जागरण, अंतर्मन के शुद्धिकरण और जीवन को लोक कल्याण के लिए समर्पित करने का महापर्व है। शिव का अर्थ ही कल्याण है। जब हम किसी के जीवन से पीड़ा कम करते हैं, किसी के चेहरे पर मुस्कान लाते हैं, किसी जरूरतमंद को स्वास्थ्य, सहयोग और सम्मान देते हैं, तब हम वास्तव में शिव की आराधना कर रहे होते हैं। शिव को केवल पूजना नहीं है बल्कि शिवत्व को अपने जीवन में आत्मसात करना है।



बाघखाला में आयोजित स्वास्थ्य शिविर में उमड़ी शिवभक्तों की भीड़

कर विधिवत पूजा-अर्चना की और आशीर्वाद प्राप्त किया।

इस अवसर पर नमामि गंगे अभियान की जॉइंट एक्ससर्ड एवं अभिनेत्री डा. आरुषि निशंक ने कहा कि अष्टादश महापुराण जैसे धार्मिक आयोजन हमारी सनातन संस्कृति, आध्यात्मिक परंपराओं और संस्कारों को मजबूत करने का कार्य करते हैं। ऐसे आयोजनों में शामिल होकर मन को शांति और सकारात्मक ऊर्जा की अनुभूति होती है। भगवान सोमेश्वर महादेव से क्षेत्र और प्रदेशवासियों के सुख, शांति एवं समृद्धि की कामना करती हूँ।

इस दौरान मंदिर परिसर में श्रद्धालुओं की भारी भीड़ मौजूद रही। पूरा वातावरण भक्ति और आध्यात्मिक ऊर्जा से सराबोर नजर आया। इस अवसर पर पूर्व प्रधान पुरुषोत्तम डोभाल, शिव प्रसाद नौटियाल, चंद्र प्रकाश भट्ट, सभासद राजेश भट्ट सहित अन्य श्रद्धालु मौजूद रहे।



दैनिक जागरण



भगवान शिव का रुद्राभिषेक कर की विश्व शांति प्रार्थना

ऋषिकेश: परमार्थ निकेतन आश्रम में सावन मास के अंतिम सोमवार पर रुद्राभिषेक कर विश्व शांति की प्रार्थना की गई। परमार्थ निकेतन के स्वामी चिदानंद सरस्वती ने ऋषिकुमारों के साथ मिलकर वैदिक मंत्रोच्चारण के साथ भगवान शिव का रुद्राभिषेक किया। उन्होंने कहा कि सावन मास का सोमवार शिव से जुड़ने और स्वयं से मिलने का पावन अवसर है। मन को शांत करने, चेतना को जागृत करने और भीतर के शिवत्व को अनुभव करने का दिव्य अवसर है। सावन की हर बूंद हमें प्रकृति, पवित्रता और जीवन के प्रति कृतज्ञता का संदेश देती है। बताया कि बाघखाला में आयोजित परमार्थ निकेतन के मेडिकल कैम्प में पैदल यात्रा कर रहे कांवड़ यात्रियों को प्राथमिक उपचार, स्वास्थ्य जांच और जरूरी दवाइयाँ उपलब्ध कराई जा रही है।

CONCLUSION

The Kanwad Mela 2026 Free Medical & Seva Initiative demonstrated how seva can address the physical, social and environmental needs of pilgrims while honouring the spiritual significance of their journey.

The initiative provided timely healthcare to **25,746 patients**, essential medicines and emergency referral support; supplied **534,500 litres of drinking water**; distributed **13,800 soaps, 205 caps and 200 T-shirts** to reinforce hygiene messages; and provided a place for pilgrims to rest and recover.

At the same time, the initiative carried the message of Green Pilgrimage, encouraging devotees to keep the route clean, collect waste, save water and plant trees. Through the involvement of saints, volunteers, healthcare teams, government officials and pilgrims themselves, the campaign sought to make cleanliness and environmental responsibility an integral part of the sacred journey.

VOTE OF THANKS

With profound gratitude, we offer our heartfelt thanks to Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji for his vision and continued inspiration to make compassionate healthcare an integral expression of seva. We deeply appreciate Bajaj General for their generous support, the entire team of government doctors from Pauri Garhwal for their dedicated medical service, and Care Nursing College for providing a committed nursing team and volunteers.

We are equally grateful to the dedicated Parmarth Seva team, whose tireless service and coordination helped bring this initiative to life. Our heartfelt thanks also go to our sister organisations, Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (GIWA) and Divine Shakti Foundation (DSF), for their valued partnership and support. We look forward to returning in 2027 with an ever-expanding spirit of service, innovative approaches and a shared commitment to touching the lives of even more devotees. Where devotion becomes service, every act of care becomes a sacred offering.

