

**The Times of India** 13.12.2013

## **NMC to appoint 20,000 'green soldiers' for Kumbh**

**NASHIK:** The Nashik Municipal Corporation (NMC) is planning to create around 20,000 'green soldiers' with an aim to keep the city clean during the forthcoming Kumbh Mela in 2015.

With just less than two years left for the commencement of the Kumbh, the civic administration of the municipal corporation has speeded up preparations for the mela works. Keeping the city clean will also be one of the major challenges before the NMC as lakhs of sadhus and other pilgrims will be visiting the city during that time.

Municipal commissioner Sanjay Khandare said, "Students from city schools and colleges will constitute the 20,000 green soldiers, who will make efforts to maintain the cleanliness of the city during the huge congregation. We are in the process of identifying the schools and colleges for the purpose. Meetings with a few schools will soon to be organised in this connection."

Besides carrying out cleaning activities, the students will create awareness among people to keep the city clean, especially the Ramkund area and the banks of the Godavari. They will urge people not to throw 'nirmalya' and other waste into the river.

Nashik is one of the four cities where the Kumbh mela is held

every 12 years. The forthcoming mela is scheduled to commence on July 14, 2015, following the hoisting of the Simhastha flag. The first 'shahi snan' (royal bath) will take place on August 29, while the second and third shahi snans will be on September 13 and 18, respectively. The flag of the Simhastha will be lowered on August 11, 2016, marking the end of the mass pilgrimage. Around 3 lakh sadhus and 75 lakh other pilgrims are expected to visit.