

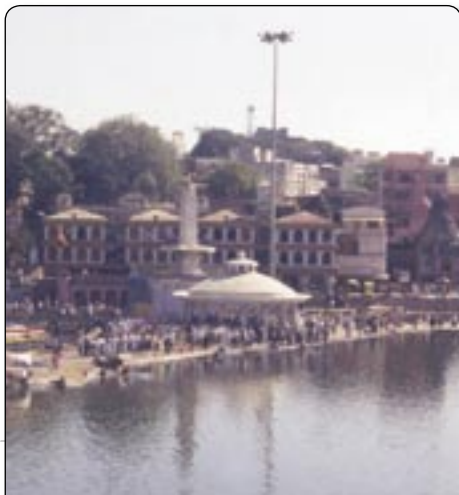
Nashik, Maharashtra, India

Nashik (also Nasik) is a medium-sized, fast-growing city not far from Mumbai. The temples and steps on the river banks make Nashik one of the holiest places for Hindus all over the world. Once every 12 years the city hosts millions of Hindus participating in the pilgrimage festival of Kumbh Mela (the Urn Festival). In Hindu mythology, Nashik got its

name when the sister of the demon Ravana proposed to marry the god Rama. Hearing this, Rama ordered her nose —“nasika” in Sanskrit—to be cut off.

It was not until the establishment of regional Muslim kingdoms in the 14th and 15th centuries and the arrival of Muslim missionaries that the Muslims in Nashik began to form a distinct community. The two leading Muslim missionaries in Nashik were Khunmir Hussaini (1520) and Syed Hussaini (1568). It is believed that both came with zealous preaching and the power to heal the sick, and so many Hindus readily converted to Islam. Devotion to these Muslim saints continues to this day.

Many Muslims in Nashik live in congested areas with poor city infrastructure. At this time there are no known ministries reaching out with the Gospel. However, this does not mean God is not at work among them. Many Christian believers in Nashik have been praying for the Muslim community. But some are fearful of Muslims as well, caught up in historical Indian prejudices between religious communities.



Nashik Statistics

- *Population: 4 million*
- *Christians: Less than 20,000 people, 0.5% (all denominations combined)*
- *Muslims: 600,000 people, 6.7% (mostly city dwellers)*

PRAYER REQUESTS

- ▶ *Pray for God to send laborers into the streets, alleys, homes and families of Nashik to proclaim Christ to the Muslim community (Mt 22:9-10).*
- ▶ *Pray for God to help the Christians in the area to move beyond prejudices to truly loving and caring for the Muslim community.*
- ▶ *Pray for God to pour out His Spirit, giving the Muslims a hunger and thirst to know God and His Word (Luke 24:27-32).*

Also pray for ...

- ▶ *There have been repeated charges of corruption concerning the funds and goods given for the Kashmir earthquake reconstruction efforts. Pray for wise and effective supervision and distribution of relief funds and materials.*