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Editorial

Imagineering the Future

the Editor

The first mark of intelligence, to be sure, is not to start things. The second mark of intelligence is to pursue to the end what you have started. Panchatantra, 3.70

On January 5th, 1979, sixteen years ago, a small band of swamis and sadhakas living on a tropical island (the one where Jurassic Park was filmed) started the newspaper you hold, little knowing that we would be joined by over a hundred men and women around the globe in our increscent effort to strengthen dharma, inform modern Hindus and turn ancient arcanum into accessible articulation. Though 1995 is still young, it has already seen major steps forward for Hinduism Today. Our new Kerala-based publisher, Mr. Ashok Varma, is now at the 20-million-strong Kumbhamela in Prayag, where he began an all-India tour to find marketing and advertising support. He has wooed a wonderful art director, C.P.R. Varma, who will keep the Indian Edition graphics standard high, and probably drive our other editors in six nations to loftier artistic achievements. Parmesh Pallanee, shown above, left Kauai this week back to his home in Mauritius, there to set in motion major plans to expand readership. Our South Africa editor, Mahalingum Kolapen, just returned to Pretoria from an extended tour of North America with his family, a sojourn which included purchase of high-end PowerMacs for his all-girl Hinduism Today team. In the UK Mr. Bharat Gheewala has founded a non-profit educational institution, assembled a team of eleven managers and set in motion telemarketing subscription systems. January was a good start.

But that, as the youth say, is history. What lies ahead? We offer a glimpse, based on present trends and prescient journalistic instincts. We hope you are with us in 2000 to celebrate our 21st birthday and to see how much of this future comes

true.

April, 1997: The awakening of a globalized instrumentality of Hindu social conscience is evident at international forums and conferences as the Hindu new year begins. Mainstream media begin to report on the multiplicity of significant contributions the East brings to critical dialogues on human rights, women's issues, poverty, survival, medical ethics, environmental breakdowns and more. This culminates at the remarkable Global Forum on Human Survival held in Jerico on the West Bank.

October, 1998: Computers become the rage among Hindus, who have discovered Macintosh clones as the perfect tool for empowering the faith and, most importantly, reaching the youth. Multimedia publications on yoga, Vedantic philosophy and digitized art of Bharat proliferate. Optical Character Recognition technology allows vast amounts of heretofore unaccessible information to be available to millions, networked by satellite. Internet groups formalize their relationships, working more closely in cyberspace than if they were in the next room. On just four CD discs one university assembles all Indian history and Hindu scripture, cross-referenced in a rainbow of languages, all automatically translated into the de facto cosmic communication coin-English-ready to radio download to your solar-powered Akash3 laptop, direct from space. For the first time ever, Hindus know what's in the Vedas, Agamas, Puranas and sundry shastras. And guess what? It's good stuff! Motilal announces publication of the Hindu Encyclopedia, a 25-volume compendium also available on Bubble Chips. Prototypes of cheap hand-held phones that will link India's 700,000 villages sans all that wiring are demonstrated in New Delhi.

June, 1999: All that high-tech stuff is economically overshadowed by high-touch cottage industries. India is swept into a renaissance of folk art and crafts, a new Nonindustrial Age that fills the coffers. High-chakra entrepreneurs harken back to Swami Vivenakanda's counsel, finding ethical ways to market India's spiritual resources instead of fighting Coca Cola and Pierre Cardin and always coming in second. Gold is discovered in Tamil Nadu.

August, 1999: The International Hotels Association announces in London the completion of a syncretic book, Hymns for Humankind, which will replace the Gideon Bible in all hotel rooms of their 12,500 members, including Taj, Hyatt, Sheraton, Oberoi, Intercontinental and Holiday Inn. Each of 12 major faiths is

equally articulated in the text.

December, 1999: India adopts a revolutionary educational system geared to achieve two goals: 1. provide Indian youth with language and math skills unequaled in the world and 2. inculcate students with spiritual values based on Hindu dharma and traditional teachings. Archeologists near Delhi uncover pre-Mohenjo-Daro empire that forces back India's history another 4,000 years. Color fax technology is the rage (Indians never could see the world in black and white anyway), and you can phone outside India without waking the neighbors.

January, 2000: Millennia fever hits India as her population exceeds 1 billion. Hinduism Today discloses that it has reached one million subscribers and will publish weekly in 25 nations. Editor confesses he failed to foresee the single most profound change of the decade, which turned out to be...

"It is bad enough to know the past; it would be intolerable to know the future."
Somerset Maugham