

[Nepal's Thirty-Year Boomtown Growth Of Hindu Centers](#)

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When the World Hindu Organization conference convenes March 25-29 in Kathmandu, Nepal, the worldwide delegates and audience will be futurizing Hinduism in what was once a giant lake. A couple of million years ago they would be swimming in Kathmandu Valley rather than driving and walking. That's what the Nepal Hindu legends say and the geologists confirm it. Geologists have found evidence of tectonic earthquakes and the old lore says a God plucked a burning lotus out of the lake waters to form the sacred hill Swayambhu. Myth and science have fused into an alloy to form complimentary knowledge.

Nepal is vivified legend, walled in by two of the most powerful Hindu traditions - Natha and Pasupata Saivite - just as it is enclosed by the Himalayan and Mahabharat mountain ranges. Until 1950 Nepal was isolationist, like Tibet, insulated from the world and the ambivalent amenities of 20th century progress. It could have happily remained as such, steeped in the magic of its terrestrial landscape and spiritual mindscape-though it was in a political catharsis.

In 1951 Nepal opened its doors, including garage doors for the first automobiles packed in on litters into Nepal, five years before a road was sculpted down into India. With an invitation to the world, Nepal's Hinduism gained a new facet: modern liberal Hindu institutions. The boom started and hasn't quit yet, with Kathmandu being the headquarters of the World Hindu Organization [see our report in the upcoming May edition].

The boom began with Yogi Narhari Nath who established the Brihad Adhyatmik Parishad nearly twenty-three years ago in 1965 in one small town, Dang, in western Nepal. They published and distributed literature and created an active Hindu ministry. In 1966 the Sanatan Dharm Seva Samiti was founded and immediately began coordinating activities between the Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs and Jains.

The Samitii established a small library and has faithfully published Dharm Sandesh every six months for the last seventeen years. It has spread over Nepal like an octopus, setting up 38 branches and 14 sub-branches and even sending tentacles down into India with ten branches. In 1984 it hosted a milestone national Hindu conference. The World Hindu Organization - WHO - founded in 1981, hopes to serve as an umbrella center for Hinduism's global network of institutions. The latest news on the WHO March '88 convention is that it has split into two independent conferences due to irreconcilable differences between the convenors.

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