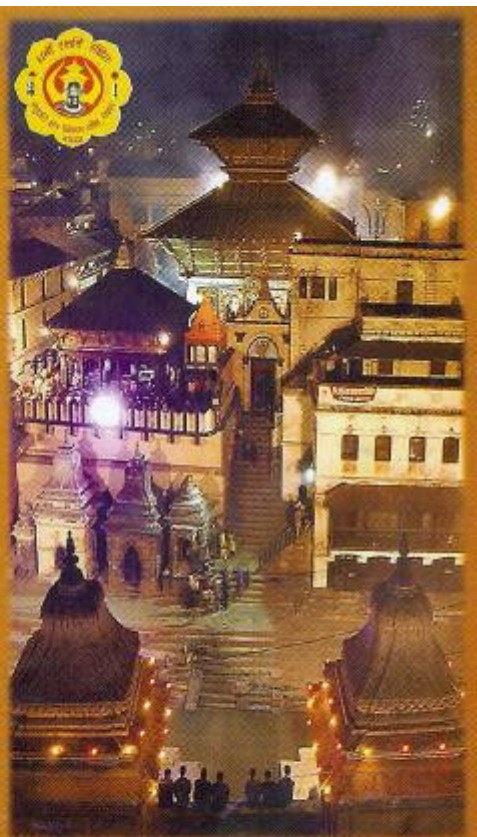


No visitor to Kathmandu would like to miss the opportunity to visit the Pashupatinath site, which is so richly endowed with places he would like to see and objects he would love to buy. Here, there are temples and idols so esoteric and monumental for the lenses of their cameras. There are shops, which sell objects that look mystic and magical. He can pack 'golden' monkeys jumping playfully about into his movie roll. He can enjoy talking with *Babas* (hermits and anchorites) drawing puffs of smoke from their *Chilims* (short smoking pipes set upright during action) or listen to the recital of devotional songs and goes down to the bank of the Bagmati river. He may be able seize the opportunity to view a Hindu funeral performed with their established long customary rituals. Briefly, almost everything in the Pashupati Area has a touch of orientalism in its traditional fashion.



The Pashupatinath temple is about 5 k.m. from the city of Kathmandu. To get there, one can hire a taxi or have a ride on a minibus or tempo (a small light three-wheeler). Alternatively, however, you can go walking. Whatever your modes of transport, you ultimately reach a wide cross-road Gaushala from where a side road leading to the north-east corner will reach you outside the Pashupatinath temple courtyard.

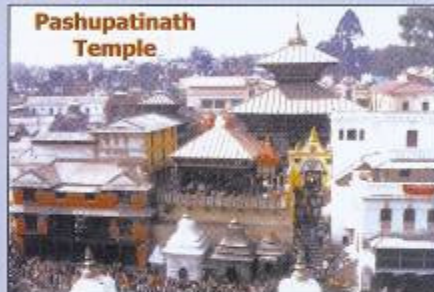
The Pashupatinath symbolizes Nepal's national glory. It is a centre of faith and religious piety for the Hindus and Buddhists of the world, as well as a unique treasure that forms part of the world heritage. The Pashupati Area has remained a source of inspiration and the feeling of tolerance and harmony between religious communities. Since time immemorial, the Pashupati Area has been a place of prayer and worship for freedom from worldly bondage as well as a place of meditation to realize oneself as part of the Supreme Self.



PASHUPATI AREA DEVELOPMENT TRUST
GOVERNING COUNCIL
 Devapattan, Kathmandu, Nepal
 Tel.No.44/1828

The west gate of the Pashupati Nath temple opens at 4 before daybreak. They open all the four gates at 9.30 in the morning. At 12 noon holy water is sprinkled over the heads of the devotees. At 2 in the afternoon the gates are closed. They reopen for *Aarti* (ritual light-offering) at 6 p.m. in the winter and at 7 p.m. in other seasons. Every fullmoon night a rich meal consisting of a variety of food stuffs is offered to the Lord.

The temple of Pashupatinath is located on the western bank of Bagmati river in Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal.



Pashupatinath Temple

In its sanctum is placed a *Jyotirlinga* (believed to have self appeared), the like of which is not found existent anywhere else in the world. It is believed that Pashupatinath is the Lord of the entire living beings and the source of eternal bliss and peace. It is a world-renowned temple and most revered both by Hindus and by Buddhists all over the world, setting a shining example of religious harmony. It is a glory of Nepal.

The precincts of the temple of Pashupatinath and its surrounding areas, spreading over 264 hectares (about 5280 *roxoms*) of land, dotted with ancient temples, archaeologically and architecturally important monuments, *vihaes*, monasteries, *stupas*, hermitages, *ghats*, *paties*, *panovas* and *sattals* are legally earmarked as the Pashupati Development Area. His Majesty, the King, keeping in mind the dire necessity of their preservation, conservation and renovation, established a Pashupati Area Development Trust (PADT) in 1987. Now, Honorable Prime Minister as its patron and Minister for

Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation as its President for the planned development of the area. Under this development plan of the PADT are included the schemes of cleaning the Bagmati river, and improving the flows of its water, preserving the temples, and other archeologically, culturally, socially and religiously important structures, protecting and conserving the natural environment, enhancing the public awareness, developing necessary facilities for pilgrims and other sight-seeing visitors, bringing out socio-religious publications and implementing the integrated programmes of all-round development of the area. A UNESCO designated World Heritage Site, Pashupati Development Area has become a great attraction both for pilgrims and for other visitors. It is popularly known as an open living museum of Nepal.

In the monasteries, hermitages and dharmashalas one can often see people practising meditation, engaged in spiritual activities and involved in Vedic and Buddhist performances.

The Pashupati Area has a depository of ancient idols, manuscripts and inscriptions, which may be of interest to the students and researchers working on history, culture and religion. The Area may also call the attention of anthropologists. The first dated inscription (Shaka Samvat 381 corresponding to 459 A.D.) is discovered in this area.



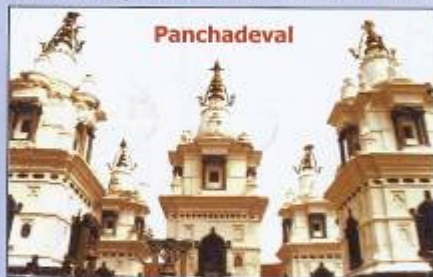
Anantanarayan



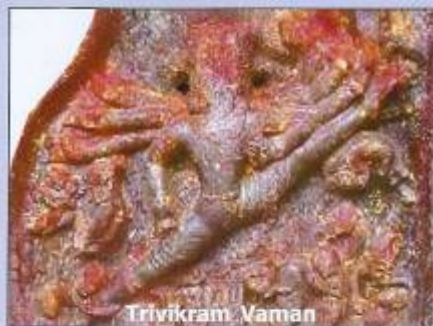
Hanuman

Pashupatinath is Lord Shiva, the God of Gods. Ancient scriptures (the Vedas, Upanishads and Puranas) have described Him as Lord of the entire living beings and the source of eternal bliss and peace.

The Pashupatinath temple is one of the holiest temples of the world revered and worshipped both by Hindus and by Buddhists. It has set a shining example of religious harmony. In the sanctum of the temple stands a Jyotirlinga (believed to have self appeared) the like of which is not found existent anywhere else in the world. It is a phallic idol, the symbol of Pashupatinath which has four images carved on its four sides. In front of the west gate of the temple is kept a colossal image of a gold gilt bull seated with composure on its four legs and with its eyes fixed on Lord Pashupatinath inside. It is mentioned in the Hindu scriptures that the bull is the carrier of Lord Shiva.



According to the *Skandapurana*, Shiva and his spouse Parvati had once been staying in an "untrod" forest enjoying free time. Disquieted by the Lord's long absence from their midst, the other gods set off in search of Lord Shiva. After a constant search they found him frolicking among the bushes in the form of a buck with a shiny horn on his head. With great effort they seized him by the horn. As soon as they clutched it, the horn broke into three pieces. One of the pieces soared into the sky and the second piece dived into the earth, and the third that remained in their grip the gods took away with them. They later placed the horn piece on a mound at Gokarna as a sign of the Lord. Ages after, however, it rose from the mound and



came flying to settle permanently at the spot where the Jyotirlinga today stands. The divine horn piece remained buried for ages, until it was unearthed by a cowherd in the form of the Jyotirlinga. It is said that a cow used to spill some milk from her udders over a particular spot before she returned home after the day's grazing. The owner of the cow would find that the milk of the cow had run short. After a brief watch-over, the cowherd came to know the reason. One day he and his men went to the spot and dug a pit and found, to their awe, a fiery phallus lying deep down. Unable to withstand the blaze of the fire, the cowherds hurriedly covered the pit with the earth. Later, they installed a *Linga* on the spot.

There is, no dated record showing when the temple of Lord Pashupatinath was first built. It may, however, be assumed that it was initially a simple structure of stone of some proportion which must have been rebuilt a number of times in the course of its development. It is recorded that it was rebuilt and provided with a golden roof by King Shiva Deva III around 1120 A.D. It possibly got its present shape under King Jayasthiti Malla in the late 14th century. Much later the surroundings of the temple were reshaped to its present state around 1920 by Maharaja Chandra Shumsher. In 1959 King Mahendra renovated the temple and its surroundings, giving them a newer look. After the establishment of Pashupati Area Development Trust (PADT), the Master Plan of the Trust has

been carried out and also the maintenance and repairs have been taken care of.

Vedic performances and Tantric rituals are associated with the worship of Pashupatinath. He is regarded as the Supreme Self who delivers humans from worldly afflictions. Lord Pashupatinath is generally worshipped as the deity with five faces. Traditional paintings portray him in human form with his left palm holding a forest with a deer in the middle. The forest symbolizes the plant kingdom and the deer, the animal world. A deeper study of the portrait will reveal, to a discerning mind, that Lord Pashupatinath is the great conservator of bio-ecology in nature.

The Nepalese people also have a tradition of worshipping Pashupatinath as the Buddha. The rituals that take place particularly on *Gargyaurnima* (the fullmoon day in the month of July) on which teachers are honoured and worshipped as equivalents of gods Lord Pashupatinath is the supreme Guru, and so is Lord Buddha-both of them teaching the value of love, humanity and universal peace.

It is believed that Lord Pashupatinath holds the following five things very dear to him. The first thing is *Gangajala* (water from a river) with which his idol is bathed before worship. The second is *Godagadha* (cow's milk) which is dripped on him through a small hole at the bottom of a round

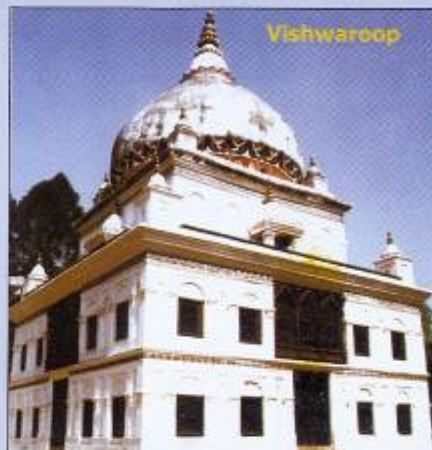
container hung over him. The third is the *Tiba* (wood apple, *Aegle marmelos*) leaves, which are offered loose or in wreath. The fourth is the *Dhanura* (thorn apple, *Datura metel*) flowers or fruits. And the fifth is the *Rudraksha* (utrassum, *Elaeocarpus spaeicus*) beads strung on yellow thread.

Every year Mahashivaratri is celebrated with devotions, enthusiasm and jubilation to the greatest



Vatsaleshwari

Pashupati Area Development Trust



day of Lord Shiva it is the most important religious occasion to worship and prayers. Mahashivaratri is the great Night of Shiva people in towns and villages of Nepal celebrate the lion fire night. They light out floor holy fires sit around them and make a great time of rejoicing. The fires which begin after dusk and continue till about midnight are believed to bless those who are getting warm by the fires.

There are many other days, which are celebrated as occasions of great festivity at the Pashupatinath temple. Two of them are mentioned here. One is *Teej* (in the month of August) which is celebrated by women only. Women go on a fast and observe an overnight vigil around the temple, singing and dancing. The other is *Balochaturdashi* (in the month of November).

It is the day on which men and women trek along a fixed track, scattering uncooked food grains over it for the departed souls for their eternal peace of their family members who passed away early that year. The scattering of grains is basically a socio-religious ritual.

Pashupati Area Development Trust