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Nepal's Declining Temples

Jha, Hari Bansh

"Pasupati Temples is Need of Immediate Repair" warns the title of a recent Rising Nepal article. The paper described the poor condition of the temples around Pasupati area in Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal, the world's only Hindu Kingdom. Of about 5,000 old and ancient temples in Kathmandu Valley, nearly 350 are located in the Pasupati area. However, on account of lack of regular maintenance, most of the temples around the Pasupati area are in a dilapidated condition, according to the article.

Lack of proper coordination between Pasupati Area Development Trust and the Guthi Sansthan is one of the major reasons for the deterioration. Almost 99 percent of the temples around the complex of Pasupatinatha are under the control of the Guthi Sansthan. The Guthi Sansthan, set up with the objective of taking care of the religious places in the country, is being blamed for the situation.

Pasupatinatha and surrounding temples have been important pilgrimage centers for Hindus throughout history. Thousands of pilgrims make the difficult journey from India and different parts of Nepal to worship here. Recently, however, the number of visitors to Bishwa Rupa Bhagawati as well as Gaudi, Kirateshwor, Gorakhnatha, Ratna Chudeshwor, Chandra Prakasheshwor and other holy shrines in the Mrigasthali area has declined considerably, largely because of the poor condition of the temples.

There is concern that Nepal's most sacred and valuable sanctuaries may lose their position as prominent pilgrimage centers due to neglect. "Yogis, priests and the poor who are living there for years are suffering for lack of security in absence of proper care and maintenance of the temples and rest houses. Many people were

hurt as the roofs and walls collapsed in the past," reports the Rising Nepal.

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