Where Are We Headed?
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World Hindu Federation faces its future

Hari Bansh Jha, Nepal

Paramount among challenges faced by Nepal Hindus today are lack of religious training and an onslaught of Western missionaries trying to convert them. With over 100 International Non-Governmental Organizations and several thousand local Non-Governmental Organizations, these missionaries practically have free rein. The World Hindu Federation (WHF) headquartered in Nepal, formed in 1981. It's prime objective is to unite Hindus "to face the aggressive attitude of Christians and Muslims, whose activities violate Nepal's national constitution," says General Secretary Jogendra Jha. I recently asked him to summarize for Hinduism Today readers WHF's current efforts to nurture and empower Hindus, especially in Nepal.

On our current size

We have 111 Central Executive Members in 33 countries. Seven hundred Hindu organizations in 41 countries are affiliated, including the Vishwa Hindu Parishad.

On current issues being dealt with

We're big on awareness campaigns, especially regarding abuses of the caste and dowry system and untouchability. We educate youth about our religion and culture, such as through running a 10-minute radio program each week.

On our best accomplishment

Our second half-decade conference in 1988! Forty-one countries sent 1,700 delegates and 70,000 visitors. Perhaps it was the largest Hindu conference ever held.

On our major weaknesses

Limitation of funds. If we had just ten percent of the funds Christian and Muslim missionaries are spending in Nepal for conversion, we could remove them. Our working staff is just ten people, with a total annual budget of only US$7,352.

On our coverage in Nepal

We have full working committees in all but three districts bordering Tibet. WHF's Nepal chapter is

nurturing 140 primary schools and health centers, especially those where Christian missionaries are active.

On current trends of religious ratios

Christians in Nepal are estimated at one million (no official statistics exist), or five percent of the total population of 20 million. If current conversion rates of Hindus and Buddhists continue, Hindus will be a minority in Nepal within the next ten years.

On how Nepal's King helps the WHF

We have His Majesty's moral support. 1Ã□21Ã□4

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