

## [Hindu Megatrends](#)

Category : [In-Depth Issues](#)

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As formulated in the January, 1989, Hinduism Today article

Help us update this list! Comments for additions, changes, deletions, may be sent to [megatrends@hindu.org](mailto:megatrends@hindu.org) We celebrate the passing of our first decade of publication with a compendium of tens, the cosmic number in Hindu thought. There are ten incarnations of Vishnu, ten cardinal directions, ten Yamas and Niyamas, ten Tirumurai scriptures, ten orders of Vedantin monks, ten braids in Siva's hair and ten vital energies. In this spirit, here are ten major trends, ten influential institutions and ten outstanding individuals. It's been a fascinating period of dynamic change for Hindus everywhere. We have reported it all, the good and the not-so-good, major stories and mundane. One thing is certain: With nearly 700 million Hindus all going through our personal and collective karmas, there will be no lack of interesting news and stories in the years ahead. No one can report on it all, but we look forward to continuing the effort!

### 1. Hindu Meekness to Hindu Pride

Though Swami Vivekananda began this trend a hundred years ago, even up to recent times Hindus were afraid to identify themselves as Hindus, or as members of a particular Hindu sect. Through the effort of many people and organizations, Hindu pride and self-confidence have replaced the self-doubt and timidity instilled during centuries of foreign rule. Native dress becomes fashionable.

### 2. Village to Global Awareness

Hindus have lived outside of India in countries such as South Africa or Fiji for over a century, but only now are we reaching beyond a limited village worldview, achieving a global consciousness and establishing worldwide communication. Among other results of this trend, Hindus are taking a prominent place among the other world religions in every forum.

### 3. East Only to East and West

Not only have our people moved from East to West, but our Hindu truths have found welcome homes in many corners of Western life. The civil rights movement, the health/vegetarian movement, the ecumenical movement, the "New Age" movement and the concern for the environment are all deeply affected by Hindu thinking. Subtle Hindu ideas find their way into mainstream world thought.

#### 4. Men Only to Men and Women

Reflecting a global trend among all nations, Hindu women are rapidly becoming more involved at all levels of Hindu religion. Some are influential religious leaders; others are instrumental in running large Hindu organizations. Hindu women are joining the work force and confronting "feminist" issues from an Eastern point of view. They no longer tolerate unfair treatment, such as forced marriages, abuse by their husbands or economic disadvantage.

#### 5. Temple Decline to Temple Revival

Ever since the last Hindu kings lost power, Hindu temples and our priesthood have deteriorated. Right now, we are rediscovering their intrinsic value and religious necessity. Not only are new temples being built in many places outside of India, old temples in India are being renovated and the problems of the priesthood addressed. Likewise, other traditional family observances, e.g. samskaras, are being revitalized.

#### 6. Introverted to Extroverted

Responding to internal pressure and outside threats, Hindus creatively reach out to help and serve others. Various forms of institutionalization and ministry reflect stronger Hindu social consciousness. Our introverted village awareness has extroverted, leading to aggressive (and occasionally violent) solutions to our challenges and difficulties.

#### 7. Limited Tools to Great Resources

Increased literacy in India and the need to teach Hinduism in multi-religious environments in other countries all lead to the development of sophisticated teaching tools--childrentos courses, Hindu schools and universities, academies for art, dance and music, Hindu encyclopedias, Sanskrit studies and more. Talented western scholars provide unexpected resources with unbiased and in-depth studies of Hinduism.

#### 8. Colony to Superpower

India is emerging as the world's newest superpower. This augments Hinduism's new-found strength and unity, just as the success of western countries lent strength and authority to Christianity in the past.

## 9. Agricultural to Technological

Rapid technological advancement in Asia permanently transforms India and thus Hinduism. India's mastery of nuclear power, space and computers will bring modern conveniences into even remote areas of India with unprecedented speed, bypassing some stages of development experienced in other parts of the world. The broadcasting of the Ramayana throughout India is just one example of how this affects Hinduism.

## 10. Major Blows to Fewer Setbacks

Sporadic abandonment of Hindu ideals causes localized setbacks, but nothing such as we've suffered in the past. The occasional adoption of violence to achieve some ends is the most obvious compromise of our ideals. Other negative trends include the neglected religious education of children in the West (which has possibly caused the loss of an entire generation); the failure to encompass the inevitable intermarriages outside Hinduism; and the tendency to give up the vegetarian ideal. External hazards may continue along the lines of the failed attacks upon us by "anti-cult" movements and the worldwide confusion caused by non-Hindu Rajneesh.

MEGATRENDS is a term coined by futurologist John Naisbett in 1982 to name the major underlying forces that are transforming society and shaping the future. To formulate these ten Hindu megatrends, we solicited the advice of the following prominent Hindu religious leaders, scholars, priest and business people. Each contributed to our analysis, however, the final conclusions as given above are the responsibility of Hinduism Today alone: Swami Bhasyananda, Vivekananda Vedanta Society, Illinois; Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Arsha Vidya Pitham, Pennsylvania; Swami Parvati Devyashram, Sri Rajarajeshwari Peetham, Pennsylvania; H.H. Sri Swami Satchidananda, Integral Yoga Institute, Virginia; Pundit R. Ravichandran, priest, California; Mr. Vidyasagar Anand, Chairman, European Council of Hindu Organizations, United Kingdom; Dr. Mahesh Mehta, President, Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America, Massachusetts; Dr. S.M. Ponniah, Advisor, Malaysia Hindu Sangum; Dr. David Knipe, Professor of South Asian Studies, University of Wisconsin; Dr. Seshagiri Rao, Professor of Hindu Religion, University of Virginia; Dr. H. Daniel Smith, Professor of Religion, Syracuse University, New York; Mr. Arvind Ghosh, publisher, Texas; Mr. Srikumar Poddar, businessman, Michigan.