



ॐ ५ गौः श्रीः शिवो वेदः



PASHUPATINATH

A GUIDE TO SACRED JOURNEY



सम्पूर्ण श्रद्धालु एवं भक्तजनहरुमा समर्पित





ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः
सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः ।
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु
मा कश्चिद्दुःखभागभवेत् ।
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om, May All be Happy
May All be Free from Illness
May All See what is Auspicious
May no one Suffer.
Om Peace, Peace, Peace.



PREFACE

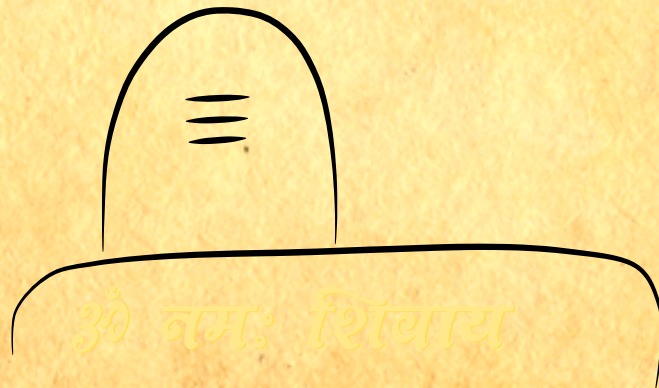
Welcome to the enchanting world of Pashupati, a realm of historical significance and spiritual magnificence. Nestled within the heart of this sacred Kathmandu valley lies the Pashupatinath area, a place that has witnessed the ebb and flow of centuries, carrying within its depths a rich tapestry of history, culture, and profound spiritual heritage.

Often, when we think of Pashupatinath, our minds instinctively capture images of the majestic main temple, which in and of itself is the epitome of devotion and reverence. Yet, beneath the shadow of its towering presence, lie numerous other temples, each with its own glory and story to tell. It is regrettable that many local visitors, including pilgrims and tourists alike, remain unaware of the existence of these smaller, yet equally significant, structures/sites that shape the landscape of this sacred space.

This guidebook, carefully crafted for a general audience, aims to unveil the hidden gems and untold stories that have been veiled by the passage of time. Amidst the socio-political turmoil and lack of proper education about our heritage, the knowledge of these places has not been properly transmitted to the younger generation. It seeks to create awareness among people, especially the younger generation, about the profoundness and intricacies of the Pashupatinath area.

Our goal, through the pages of this guidebook, is to illuminate the richness and splendor of the Pashupatinath area in all its glory. Whether you are a casual visitor, an ardent devotee, or a spiritual seeker, it is our hope that this guidebook will serve your purpose, leading you through the alleys of the Pashupatinath area with ease and grace. With each turn of the page, you will delve deeper into the details of this extraordinary place, its legends, rituals, and the spiritual significance that reverberates through every stone and monument. We invite you to embark on a journey of discovery, to unravel the secrets that lie hidden within the nooks and crannies of this sacred place. Together, let us embrace the heritage that has been passed down through generations, breathing life into the vibrant realm of Pashupati. By the end of this journey, we hope you will emerge with a newfound appreciation for the splendor and antiquity of the Pashupatinath area.

So, dear reader, prepare to embark on a sacred journey and allow yourself to be transported through time and space, and immerse yourself in the vibrant aura of Pashupati. May this guidebook be your compass, illuminating your path as you navigate the area, and may it forever hold a cherished place in your heart.



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Pashupatinath Area in the form of Sri Yantra

The Sri Yantra, also known as the Sri Chakra, is a sacred geometric pattern, a.k.a. Yantras that holds significant spiritual and mystical symbolism in Hinduism. It is considered one of the most powerful and auspicious yantras, representing the supreme cosmic energy known as the Goddess Lalita Tripurasundari, the Divine Mother.

The Sri Yantra is a complex geometric pattern composed of nine interlocking triangles that form a central point or Bindu. These triangles consist of four pointing upward, representing the masculine or Shiva energy, and five pointing downward, representing the feminine or Shakti energy. They symbolize the divine union of the masculine and feminine energies, representing the interplay between Shiva (consciousness) and Shakti (creative power). The intersections of these triangles create 43 smaller triangles, each representing various gods and goddesses.



Sri Yantra

The whole Pashupati area is created in the shape of the *Sri Yantra*. This area is also known as the *Tantra Bhumi* of *Shiva* and *Shakti*. Generally, in ancient times, powerful temples were constructed in the form of yantras. Therefore, Pashupatinath in the form of *Sri Yantra* is considered a powerful tool for meditation and spiritual growth as well as a source of abundance, prosperity, and spiritual fulfillment.

Nine is a very significant number in the Pashupatinath Temple area. In Newari, the collection of nine things is called *Gungu*, and thus, the ancient name of the Pashupat area was *Goola*, which translates to nine in English. It was called so because everything in the Pashupati area is nine in number.

1. Nine Shakti Peethas
2. Nine Kshetra Paals
3. Nine Doors
4. Nine Chowks
5. Nine Holy Spouts
6. Nine Ponds
7. Nine Wells
8. Nine Toles
9. Nine Dabalīs

Did You Know?

The Pashupati area was also known as *Devpatan* (देवपाटन). The legend behind this name is that in ancient times, wherever people dug they found the idol of gods and goddesses and Shiva lingas.



Legends Of Pashupatinath

As we know, in the epic Mahabharata, the Pandavas defeated their cousins (Kauravas), gurus, and clan members by killing them in the ancient war of Kurukshetra. They had committed *gotra hatya* (the killing of their own clan members), *Guru hatya* (the killing of teachers), and *Brahmanahatya* (the killing of Brahmins).

They wanted to repent for their sins. To continue on their path of atonement, they handed their kingdom to their children and went to seek lord Shiva for his blessings. At first, they went to Kashi, which is supposed to be the favorite city of lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati. However, lord Shiva had been deeply enraged by their dishonesty and death in the war of Mahabharata. So, lord Shiva tried to hide himself from them and remain elusive to their reach. Since Pandavas followed Lord Shiva wherever he escaped, he transformed himself into a bull to disguise himself.

Bhima, seeing the bull, immediately knew that the bull had to be lord Shiva, so he went for the bull, but the bull disappeared into the ground. Bhima caught the bull by its tail and the bull rose out of the ground. When he rose up, the forehead came out in Pashupatinath, the hump in Kedarnath, the horns in Tunganath, and the navel in Madhyamaheshwar.

Did You Know?

The name Pashupati (Pashu: life forms, Pati: lord) means “the lord of all life forms”. In yoga, Pashupatinath is also seen as someone who has conquered all the animalistic characteristics within oneself.

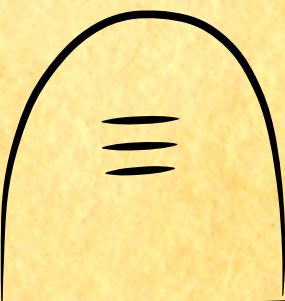
Shiva's Body and the Five Chakras

In certain yogic and Tantric traditions, Pashupatinath along with Kedarnath, Muktinath, Tunganath, and Kailash are revered as the five chakras within the energy body of Shiva. In Tantra, the world's geography is seen in the form of a human body. In the body, the land of Nepal is seen as the forehead and Pashupatinath is seen as the third eye, the Ajna chakra.

Did You Know?

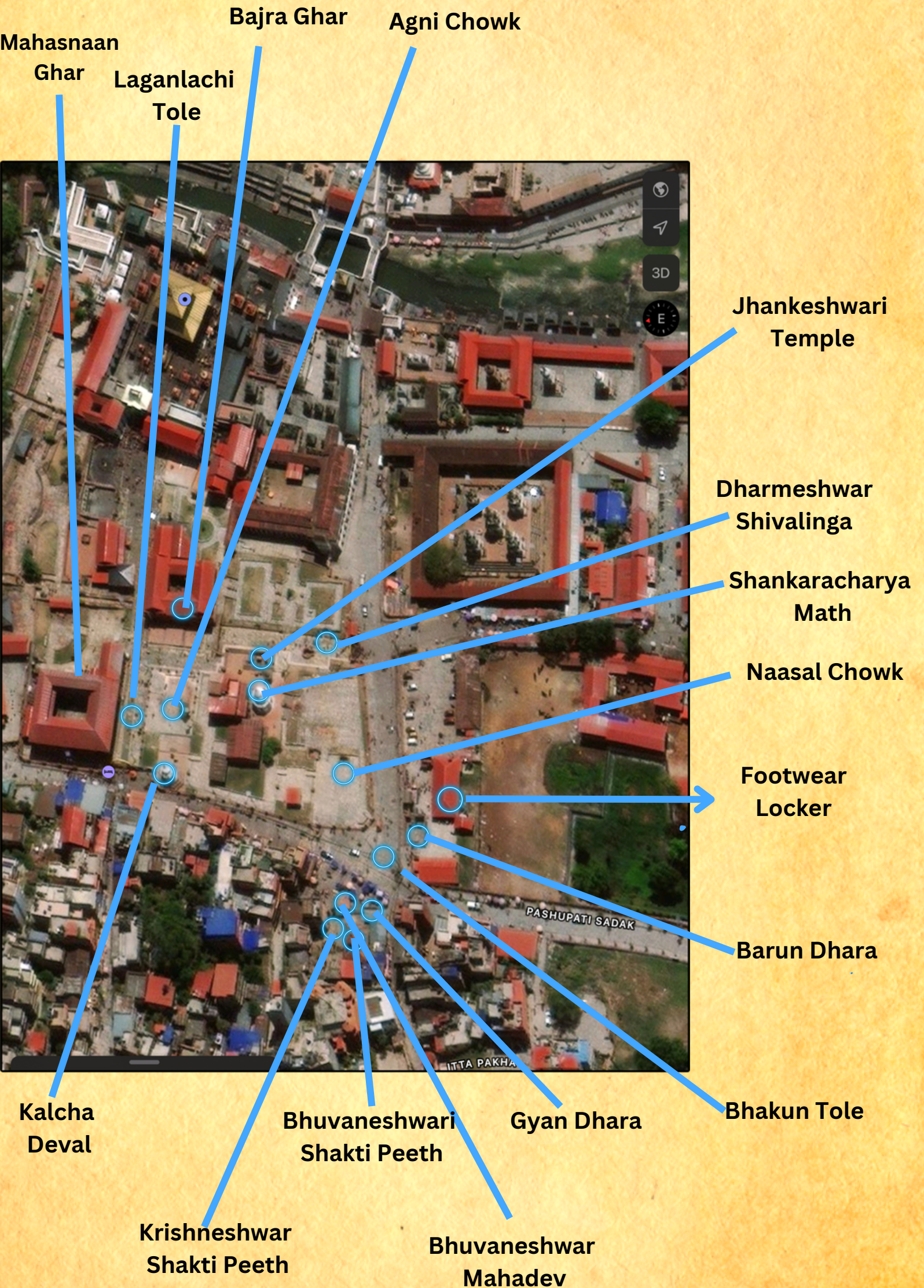
When the Shivapuri Baba came to visit Pashupatinath, Shiva appeared to give him blessings and asked him to stay at Pashupatinath. For the rest of his life, Shivapuri Baba stayed near Bagdwar (बागद्वार) which is located in the jungles of Shivapuri National Park, and during winter, he stayed in Dhruvasthali (Bankali) area near Pashupatinath.

Pashupatinath was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1979 AD. The Pashupatinath Area houses more than 500 temple shrines along with the main temple.



PART I





Bhakun Tole (भकुन टोल)

The Dabali situated here at the Bhakun Tole is used for the immersion of the Gods. Different Jatras and Naach are started from here. For example, Bankaali Jaatra starts from this Dabali.



Bhuvaneshwari Shakti Peetha (भुवनेश्वरी शक्ति पीठ)

This temple holds significant importance as one of the prominent Shakti Pithas in the Pashupati region. Its origin predates the Lichchhavi period, and it stands as one of the few temples constructed alongside the Pashupatinath temple. The deity enshrined here is kept in strict seclusion, accessible only to the priest. A separate guru guides the tantric method of prayer, known as Agam, which is then performed by the Karmacharyas and Bajracharyas. Within the tantric tradition, worship revolves around Shakti Mata, Bhairav, and Ganesh, with Bhuvaneshwori revered as the mother of all deities, symbolizing the Earth (Bhu: Dharti).



Did You Know?

If you see a Shivalinga without a Nandi around it, it is the Samadhi site where sages/yogis have previously taken Samadhi.



Bhuvaneshwar Mahadev (भुवनेश्वर महादेव)

Bhuvaneshwar Mahadev lies in an open space and is considered the representation of the masculine counterpart of Bhuvaneshwari. It is one of the important Shivalingas in the Pashupatinath Area.



Bhuvaneshwar Mahadev

Gyaan Dhara (ज्ञान धारा)

One of the nine dharas (hitis) in the Pashupati area, this dhara was constructed during the Lichhavi period, typically found near old settlements in Kathmandu. It receives a continuous flow of underground water from "muhans," which is connected to the dhara through pipes, providing a source of water. (Dhara = hiti in Newari language)



Krishneshwar Shakti Peetha (कृष्णेश्वर शक्ति पीठ)

During the occasion of Baisakh Akshaya Tiritiya, a jatra takes place where the Bankaali God is ceremoniously immersed in this Shakti Pitha.



Barun Dhara (बरुण धारा)



Footwear Locker

Before entering the Main temple, the visitors are requested to remove their shoes and keep them at the locker house. The devotees wash their feet before entering any temple. Bare and wet feet are more conducive to the energy and grace of the temple.



Nasal Chowk (नासल चौक)

Nasal Chowk, an ancient chowk in the old settlements, used to be densely populated until the implementation of the Guru Yojana in 2059 BS. This initiative led to the destruction of 119 houses in the area. Notably, Nasal Chowk holds a special significance for aspiring musicians as they must first worship Natraj at this location before commencing their musical journey. It is known as the land of music. During every occasion, traditional musical instruments such as Dhime and others are played, beginning as well as concluding the festivities at this chowk. It is customary for musicians to pay a visit to this place at least once a year, both before and after learning music, even though there are other temples dedicated to the same purpose in different areas.



Dharmeshwar Shivalinga

Jhamkeshwari Shakti Pitha (झम्केश्वरी/झङ्केश्वरी शक्ति पीठ)

This sacred site is renowned as one of the Shakti Pithas, where the deity is worshiped as the "Chinnamasta Mata," symbolizing a headless goddess and embodying intense fierceness. Within this Shakti Pitha, the Agni Kunda (fire pit) of the goddess is located. Legends tell of a powerful flame that used to burn here, drawing anything flying above into its fiery depths. To prevent this, the goddess is now depicted upside down symbolically, and tantric practices are employed to control the flame. A significant puja is also performed during Dashain and Kaalratri at this revered location.



Just beside this temple is Shankaracharya's mandir, which was destroyed by the earthquake of 2072 and was recently reconstructed and inaugurated by Swami Nikhilananda Saraswati Ji Maharaj.

Shankharacharya Math (शंकराचार्य मठ)

Shankharacharya chose to reside in this location during his visit to Pashupati. Presently, Mathadis(head of math) are still appointed and play a crucial role in performing essential rituals in this area. Their presence and guidance are instrumental in ensuring the proper observance of the Vidhi and Vidhana (rituals and procedures) associated with Pashupati.



Bajraghar (बज्रघर)

Originally established as a durbar, this place was constructed by Rana Bahadur Shah, serving as a venue to provide food to the visiting bhaktas (devotees) and sadhu santa (saints) who arrived from various regions.



Lagan Lachhi Tole (लगन लाछी टोल)

It is also one of the 9 toles of the Pashupati Area. One of the Shakti Peeth lies here. It also has one of the nine gates located at Pashupati.



Mahaisnaan Ghar (महास्नान घर)

Originally established by Rana Bahadur Shah, this durbar is currently undergoing transformation into a museum, potentially with a new name. Once a year, a grand ceremonial bath known as Maha Isnaan takes place for Pashupatinath, and the temple procures all the necessary raw materials for Maha Bhog (a special offering) from this location.



Kalcha Deval (कल्चा देवल)

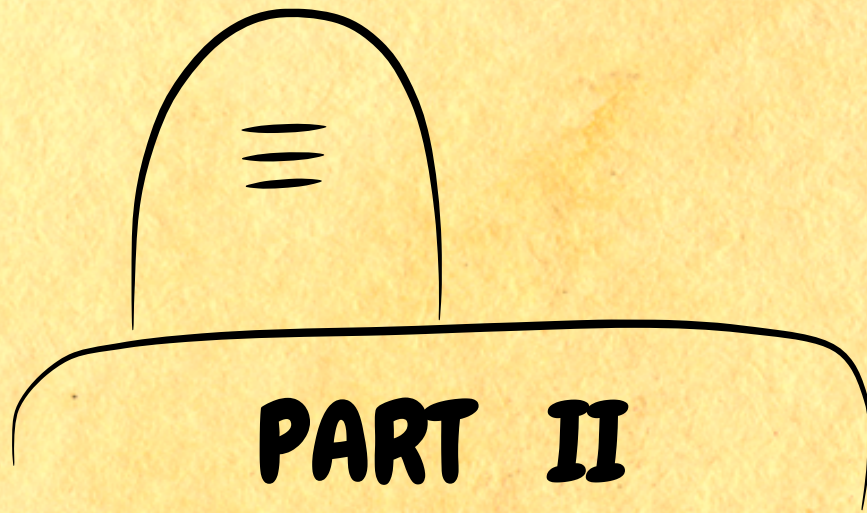
This deval is present right in front of the Mahaisnaan Ghar. In the center of this temple, there is a shiva linga, and right at its back, there is a सिंहासन (throne). There are statues of Garuda and Nandi right in front of the temple. This temple is called Amaleshwar Mahadev (अमलेश्वर महादेव) by the locals but is called Kalcha Deval in the Newari language. The chowk in front of this deval is called Kalcha Chowk.



Agni Chowk (अग्नि चोक)

In this chowk, Bachleswori Jatra takes place every year.





PART II

Entering the Main Temple



The Main Gate



Shankaracharya Premise

When the prominence of all the religions was rising, Shankaracharya was traveling to protect the Hindu religion and culture. During his journey, he came to Pashupatinath too. This math consists of Shankaracharya's sculpture and his four disciples' sculpture.

On the entrance of Shankaracharya math, you will see "Shree 1008" being used to refer to Shankaracharya. It is the highest title for a sanyasi (monk) of a particular order.



Aagam Ghar (आगम घर)

Aagam ghar was established in Pashupatinath to practice the sadhana of Pashupatinath in a tantric way. It is said that every god that exists in the main Pashupati temple also exists in the Aagam ghar.

Did You Know?

Shiva's knowledge is divided into two parts: Nigam (Vedic) and Aagam (Tantric). Accordingly, pooja in Pashupati is conducted in these two ways: Vedic vidhi and Tantric vidhi.

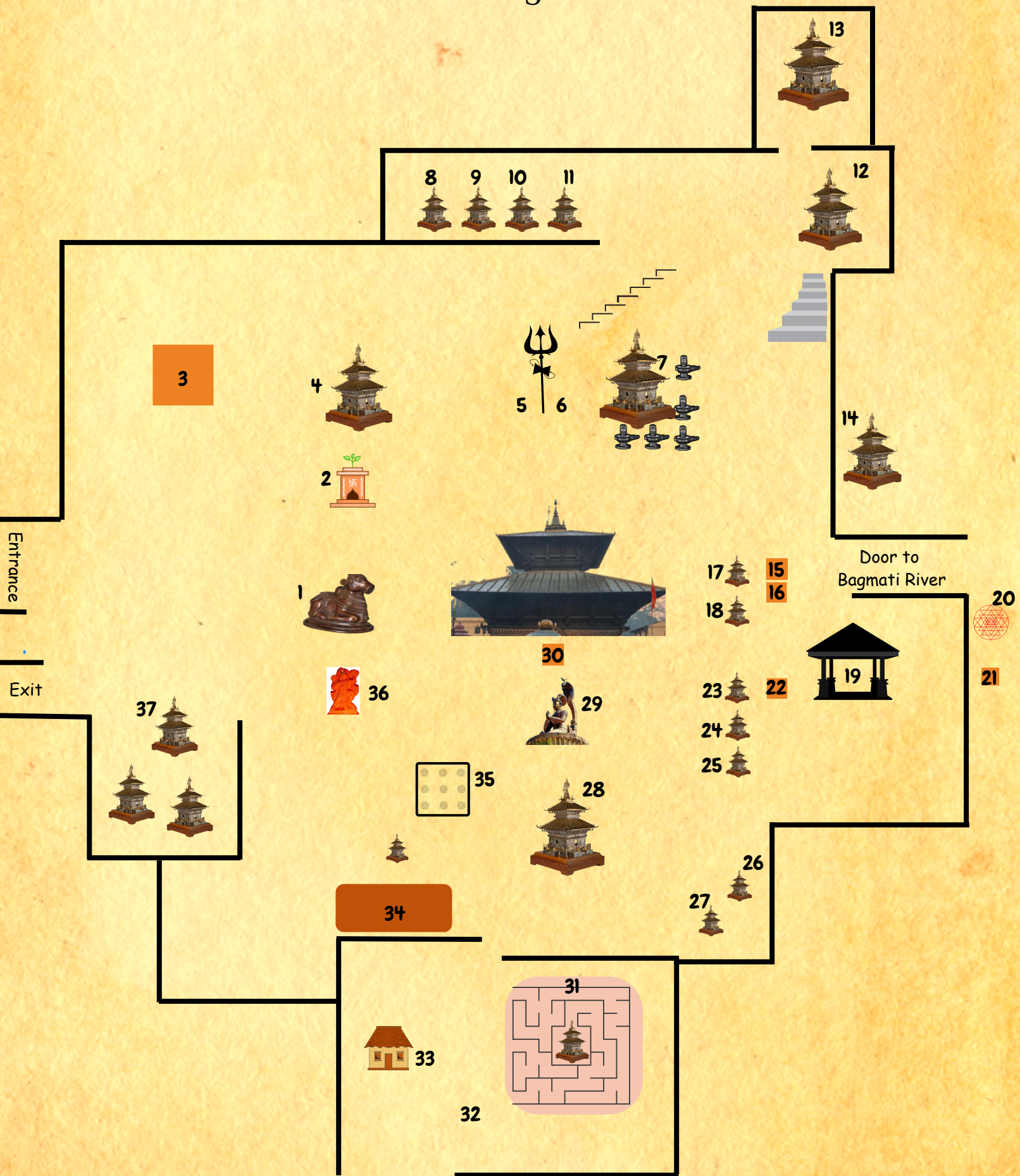
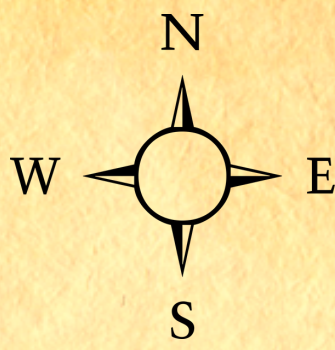


The priest here is a tantric Nepali Bhatta. Visitors are not allowed to go inside. Only the priests of Aagam ghar (i.e. the first Bhatta-*Shambasadhashiva Bhatta* and his lineage) are allowed to worship inside.

The three-storeyed building lies to the southwest side of the main Pashupatinath temple, outside the west entrance door. Till 12 noon, the Vedic pooja using Shaligram, Rudra Abhisekh, Panchamrit, and Vedic mantras takes place in the main Pashupatinath temple. After 12 pm, tantric pooja using Shri Yantra takes place at Aagam Ghar. The offerings to Pashupatinath at Dharamshala and the animal sacrificed at Kirtimukha Bhairav are later brought to Aagam ghar.

The Main Door





Legend

1. Nandi
2. Tulasi Math
3. Draveshwar Mahadev
4. Brahmeshwar
5. Annapurna
6. Dattaterya
7. Chandeshwar
8. Homeshwari Panchayan Mandir
9. Kedar Narsingheshwar
10. Sher Narsingheshwar
11. Ratna Kumari
12. Basukinath Temple
13. Badrinath Temple
14. Shree Siddheshwar
15. Shesh Narayan
16. Chandan
17. Surya Narayan
18. Laal Ganesh
19. Mukti Mandap
20. Pinacple of Gangamata Temple
21. Mirgeshwar, Birupakshya Temple
22. Kedarnath
23. Krishna Mandir
24. Drinking Water
25. Dibeshwar
26. Kritimukh Bhairav
27. Shetala Mai
28. Unmatta Bhairav
29. Statue of Royal Family
30. Dharmasheela
31. 64 shivalingas
32. Carvings of 10 Avatars of Bishnu
33. Main Bhatta Niwas
34. Statue of Devis
35. Nava Graha
36. Hanuman
37. Satya Narayan Temple

Main Pashupatinath Temple

The Sanctum Sanctorum Shivalinga (गर्भगृह शिवलिङ्ग)

The Shivalinga in the main temple is said to have appeared on its own. Tracing down the history, the current sanctum was established by renovating the previous sanctum in 1417 B.S. Inside are two garbhagrihas: the inner garbhagriha or sanctum sanctorum is where the idol is placed, and the outer sanctum is an open corridor-like space.

The main Shivalinga of the Pashupatinath Temple has five faces. *Vamana* (North), *Aghora rupa* (south), *Tatpurusha* (east), and *Sudyojata* (west) – facing in four directions are regarded as 'Char Dham'. The fifth face facing the zenith is known as *Ishana*. The five faces also represent five elements. The air element is represented by the east side (*Tatpurusha*), the earth element by the west side (*Sudyojata*), the water element by the north side (*Vamana*), the fire element by the south side (*Aghora rupa*), and the space element (ether) by the zenith (*Ishana*).

Each of the four directions holds Rudraksha mala and a water pot (*kamandalu*). The upper side of the linga has *Jalahari* made of gold that covers the Shivalinga.

Did You Know?

The commencement of the main pooja occurs once the Shree Yantra is worshiped within the primary sanctum. The priest utilizes the roots of Kush grass and Chandan (sandalwood) paste to depict the Shree Yantra on the upper surface of the main Shivalinga. The Shree Yantra represents the divine feminine energy, also known as Shakti or Tripurasundari.

The Architecture of Pashupatinath Temple (पशुपतिनाथ मन्दिरको वास्तुकला)

The two-storeyed Pashupatinath temple is built in pagoda style. Four doors of the temple are silver sheeted, and the pinnacle is of gold. The two-level roofs are of copper with gold covering. The wooden windows, doors, gates, and all the accessories are beautifully crafted, representing the historical structure that has been followed for ages.

The tympanum (Toran in Nepali and Tolan in Newari) is a structure above the four doors. There are four tympanum facing four directions above each of the four doors. The four directions of the temple represent four different yugas, i.e. Satya yuga, Dwapar yuga, Treta yuga, and Kali yuga.

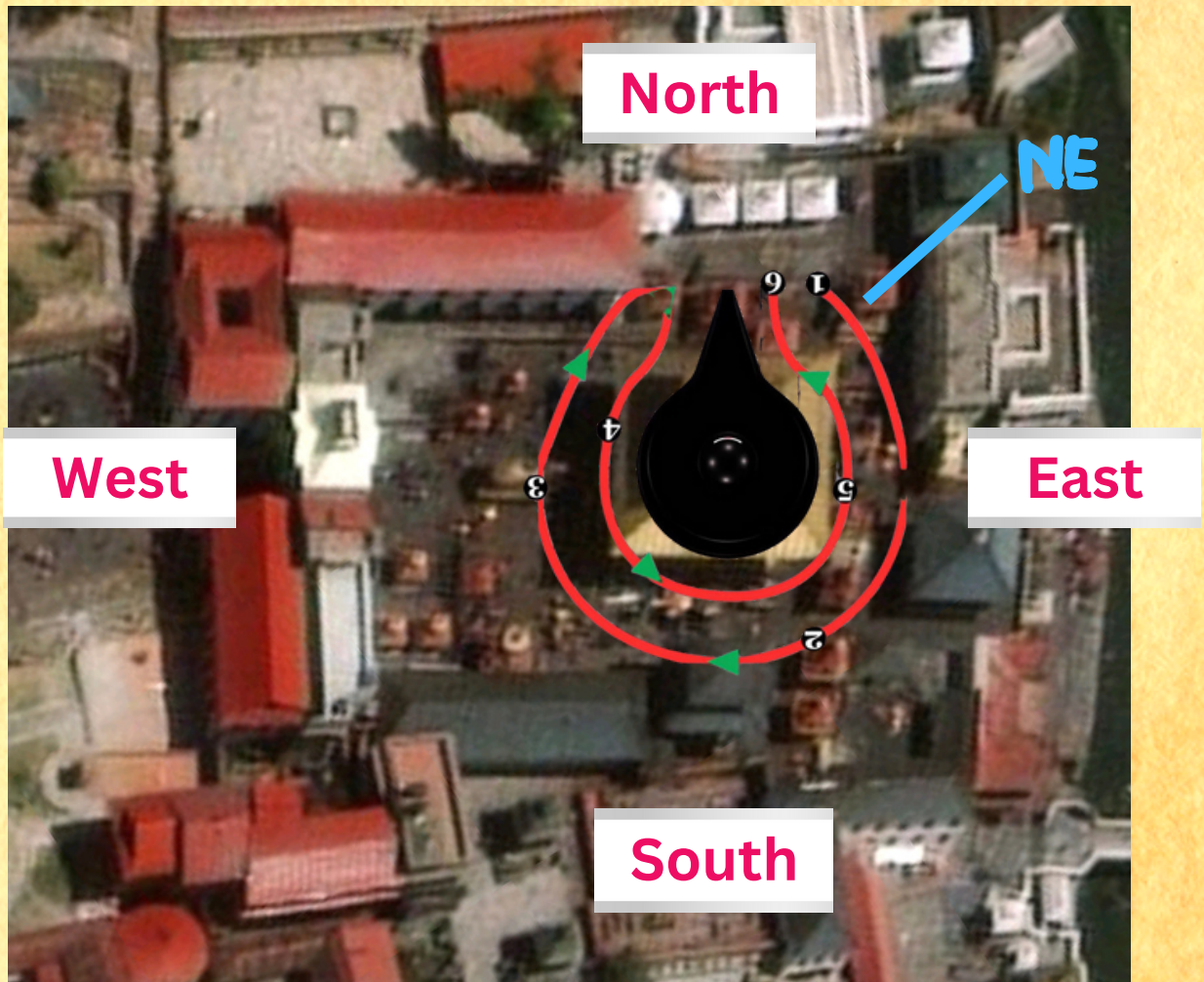
Did You Know?

We should always circumambulate a temple in a clockwise direction. When we circle the temple clockwise our right side faces the temple and the left side faces outward. The left side of the body is regarded as Shakti and the right side as Shiva.

Circumambulating the Main Temple - Parikrama vidhi (परिक्रमा विधि)

A proper circumambulation of Shivalinga is not a full circle as is done for other temples. We should do the main temple parikrama 3 times by making a half circular curve or crescent moon shape.

By walking from the south direction, reach the Ishana (northeast) direction. First, we do darshan from the Ishan (Northeast). Then, we walk towards east and do darshan of the Tat Purush from East. Then, we walk towards south and do darshan of the Aghor face from south. Then we walk towards north and do darshan of the Bamdev/Vamana from the northwest direction. Then, we return towards the west and do darshan of the Sadhyojata from west. Then, we walk towards the south and do darshan from south and then walk east and reach the starting point concluding the parikrama/circumambulation.



West Side (पश्चिम भाग)

Drabeshwor Mahadev (द्रबेश्वर महादेव)

As one enters the west door, one finds a Dabali to the left side. The Shivalinga here is called Drabeshwor Mahadev, the Lord of wealth. The name "Drabeshwor Mahadev." comes from Dravya (द्रव्य) which in Nepali refers to wealth.

Bhajan Center (भजन केन्द्र)

Built by Chandra Sumsher in 1970 B.S, this two-storeyed building has two main purposes. The ground floor is where bhajans (devotional singing) are performed for Pashupatinath. The first floor has the office of Pashupati Area Development Trust. The other rooms are separated for the work related to the management and protection of the temple.



Did You Know?

During worship, Tulasi (Holy Basil) leaves are offered to Vishnu whereas Belpatra (stone apple) leaves are offered to Shiva. There is a Tulasi math and bel tree in Pashupatinath.

Shree Brahmeshwor Mahadev (श्री ब्रह्मेश्वर महादेव)

Though named Shree Brahmeshwor Mahadev, this temple is dedicated to Lord Brahma. There used to be a sculpture of Brahma, but at present there is a Shivalinga in the temple. The main sculpture of Brahma was stolen around 50 years ago and is now in "protective custody" in the Metropolitan Police Circle, Gaushala

The ornate walls of this Brahma mandir have 43 carvings of different Hindu Gods and Goddesses. For example: Ashtadikpaal, Ganga Jamuna, Ganesh, Vishnu, Ardhanarishwar, Nataraj, etc.

North Side (उत्तर भाग)



Did You Know?

Ardhanarishwar is a form of Shiva where one half is Maheshwar (Shiva) and the other half is Uma (Parvati). The male side is the passive force of the universe and the female side is the active force of the universe. Therefore, Ardhanarishwar indicates a union of two cosmic forces.

Shree Annapurna (श्री अन्नपुर्ण)

To the north side of the sanctum is a small temple of Maa Annapurna (one of the forms of Maata Parvati) with a statue. A Trishul lies in front of the statue. The temple bears inscriptions of the Lichhavi period (400 - 750 CE) scripts, providing glimpses of that historical time period.

Dattatreya/Jwarhareshwor temple (दत्तात्रेय/ज्वर्हेश्वर महादेव)

Jwarhareshwor Mahadev is also known as Trishira Mahadev. The sculpture in this Dattatreya temple consists of the child form of Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheshwar. One single body holds three heads, legs, and arms of the respective Gods. Brahma is known as the creator, Bishnu is known as a protector, and Maheshwar is known as a destroyer. There is an idol of Yamaraj, the God of death, below Dattatreya. There is a belief that worshipping Jwarhareshwor with dahi-chiura (curd and beaten rice) helps in treating fever.

Shree Chandeshwar Shivalaya (श्री चण्डेश्वर शिवालय)

To the northeast of the sanctum lies Chandreshwar Shivalaya. The temple has Narwadeshwar Shivalinga at present, but it is said that Chandeshwar Shivalinga or any other symbol of Chandeshwar used to be here before. Chandeshwar is a form of Shiva that is worshiped daily by priests in Pashupatinath temple. Shree Chandeshwor Mahadev temple is dedicated to Ravan, a famous character in Ramayan, who was a great devotee of Lord Shiva.

Basuki/Basukinath Temple (बासुकी/बासुकीनाथ मन्दिर)

To the Ishaan (north-east) direction of Pashupatinath temple lies a two-storeyed temple built in Nepali style which is known as Basuki temple. This temple is considered the most important temple in the premise after Pashupatinath temple. Devotees first worship Basuki temple and then worship Pashupatinath following the mythological belief that Lord Shiva grants wishes of those devotees who worship his Ganas before worshipping him.

There is a group of 8 Naags is known as Astanaagas. Ananta, Basuki, Takshyak, Karkotak, Padya, Maha padya, Shakkapaal, and Kukil. Basuki is one of the astanaagas.

Did You Know?

There are 4 Shiva Lingas in the four corners of the main Pashupatinath temple, creating a replica of the main Shivalinga.

There are a few temple-like structures on the north side of the main Pashupati which carry historical significance as the then kings built them in the memory of dead family members.

East Side (पुर्व भाग)

Siddheshwar Mahadev (सिद्धेश्वर महादेव)

Siddheshwar Mahadev is the only one-faced Shivalinga in Pashupatinath. It is also called Gupteshwar Mahadev. The Basuki Bhattas (priests of the Basuki temple) worship this Shivalinga on a daily basis.

Shree Siddheshwar (Apamrityuhareshwor) Mahadev

People worship Shree Siddheshwar in the belief that worshipping here would help them avoid untimely death.

Shree Mukti Mandap (Chausatthi mandap) (मुक्ति/चौसट्टी मण्डप)

Mukti Mandap has 64 pillars in total which are believed to be ways of salvation from 64 kinds of sins. There are two Shivalingas in this mandap: Mukteshwar Shivalinga and Santaneshwor Shivalinga (relating to Santaapahareshwar (सन्तापहरेश्वर)Mahadev). The act of offering water to the Santaneshwor Shivalinga is believed to bring about prosperity for one's children and aid in fertility.

Mukti mandap is popular for homa and hawan pooja, and sitting here is believed to be equivalent to sitting on God's lap. Mukti mandap is also the place to sing hymns and bhajans. Famous singers from Nepal and India come here for Sangeet Sadhana.

Kedarnath (केदारनाथ)

To the east side of the main temple exists a Shilakhanda which is worshiped as Kedareshwor. It is also called Mukunda Bhairav. The Shilaa is revered as the embodiment of the throat and back of Kedarnath that lies in India.

To the north of Kedareshwar is another circular Shilakhanda which is in the structure of mortar and pestle. Devotees who visit Pashupatinath rotate this Shilakhanda and put on the sandalwood paste on their forehead.

Radha Krishna Temple (राधाकृष्ण मन्दिर)

Kaalaa Krishna's mandir is how devotees know Radha Krishna Mandir. There is an idol of Lord Krishna inside the temple; to his right lies the idol of Rukmini and to his left lies the idol of Satyabhama (Krishna's other wife.)

South Side (दक्षिण भाग)

Kirtimukh Bhairav (किर्तिमुख भैरव)

The idol of Kirtimukh Bhairav is one of the oldest idols in Pashupatinath. The idol only has a face and is positioned on the ground. Kirtimukh Bhairav is worshiped according to Panchaayan Bidhi. Devotees offer coconut to Kirtimukh Bhairav on different occasions.

Sheetala Maata (शीताला माता)

The two-storeyed temple which happens to be only six feet tall exists beside Kirtimukh Bhairav. This temple has the symbol of Sheetala (coolness). The statue, now not in proper shape, looks as if a mother is carrying a child on her left lap. It is believed that worshiping Sheetala mata helps in protecting children and healing Bifar disease (pox diseases), hence she is known as the Goddess of Healing.

Unmatta Bhairab (उन्मत्त भैरव)

It is said that in ancient times different catastrophic events like diseases, fire, drought, etc. occurred frequently in parts of the Kathmandu valley which lie in the southern direction of the main temple. Then, priests at Pashupatinath suggested building a Bhairav temple to the south of the main temple to balance energy. After Unmatta Bhairab was built, the energies of the temple were balanced and then people started inhabiting the southern part of the valley.



Did You Know?

Late King Birendra brought a large-scale program in 2047 BS to reform, renovate, and expand the Pashupati area which is known as "Guru Yojana". The present temple area was established in B.S. 2047 by King Birendra and Queen Aishwarya.

Statues of Royal family members (राजपरिवार प्रतिमाहरु)

There are a few statues of royal family members on the south side of the sanctum. Two columns of gold are made upon which rest the statues of the Late King Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah and the Late King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah. The history starts back in B.S. 1863 when Bhotu Pandey established the statues of Rana Bahadur Shah and Rajrajeshwari. Later, statues of Prithvi Narayan Shah, Pratap Singh, Rajendra Laxmi, etc. were added.

Dharma Shilaa (धर्मशिला)

There is a Shilaa right in front of the south door of the main sanctum which is called Dharma Shilaa. The Shilaa was covered by a copper plate in 2016 B.S.

Harek Purnimako din Pashupatinathkaa laagi lagaaine maha snaanko mahabhog yahi dharmashaalaamaa raakhinchha ra Shreeko Aghor mukh tira tala jala sahitko chaadiko paatra baata pawitra sutra raakhi yas dharma shaalaamaa chhuwaainchha.

During the Malla period in Nepal, oath taking ceremonies took place by touching the Dharma Shilaa. As people pledged to protect dharma in this ceremony, the name Dharma Shilaa came into practice.

Nawa graha / Nakshyatra Shilakhand (नवग्रह/नक्षत्र शिलाखण्ड)

To the southwest (Nairitya) from the main Temple, there lies a Shilaa on the ground. The Shilaa has carvings of 9 planets and 27 constellations which represent the astrological calendar. The Nepali calendar still follows the Luni-Solar chart of Vedic astrology that helps to determine the auspicious Tithis, muhurta, etc. for conducting rituals, worship, and festivals.

Satya Narayan temple (सत्य नारायण मन्दिर)

As one enters the west door, one finds a Dabali on the right side. The Dabali consists of three small temples, pillars, and bells. One of the temples here is known as Satya Narayan temple. The temple has a five feet tall statue of Lord Vishnu.



Did You Know?

There are two Narayans in the temple area which are known with different names.

- Sesh Narayan, also known as mini-Budhanilkantha
- Shree Garun Narayan, also known as Changunarayan

Rudragareshwor Mahadev Temple (रुद्रगारेश्वर महादेव मन्दिर)

Shivalinga at Rudragareshwar is one of the 64 Siddhalingas in Nepal. There is also a Rudrakunda near this tree. Water in Rudrakunda is believed to have come from Muktinath.

Rudragareshwor is the resting place of Pashupatinath. This place is famous for Rudra Abhishek: a ritual for offering milk or water to Shivalinga. People also take Sankalpa or vow here while doing Abhisekh and then go to worship at the main Pashupatinath temple.

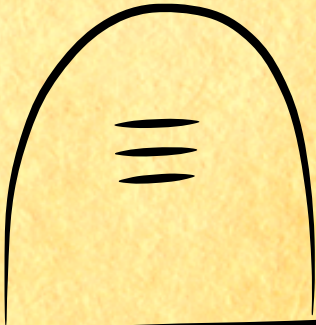
Rudragareshwor is an important place in terms of religious art and sculpture. Late King Tribhuvan had ordered the conservation of Shivalingas and idols, and the three-layered structure of this temple was used to protect the idols in 2015/2016 BS.



Bagmati River (बागमती नदि)

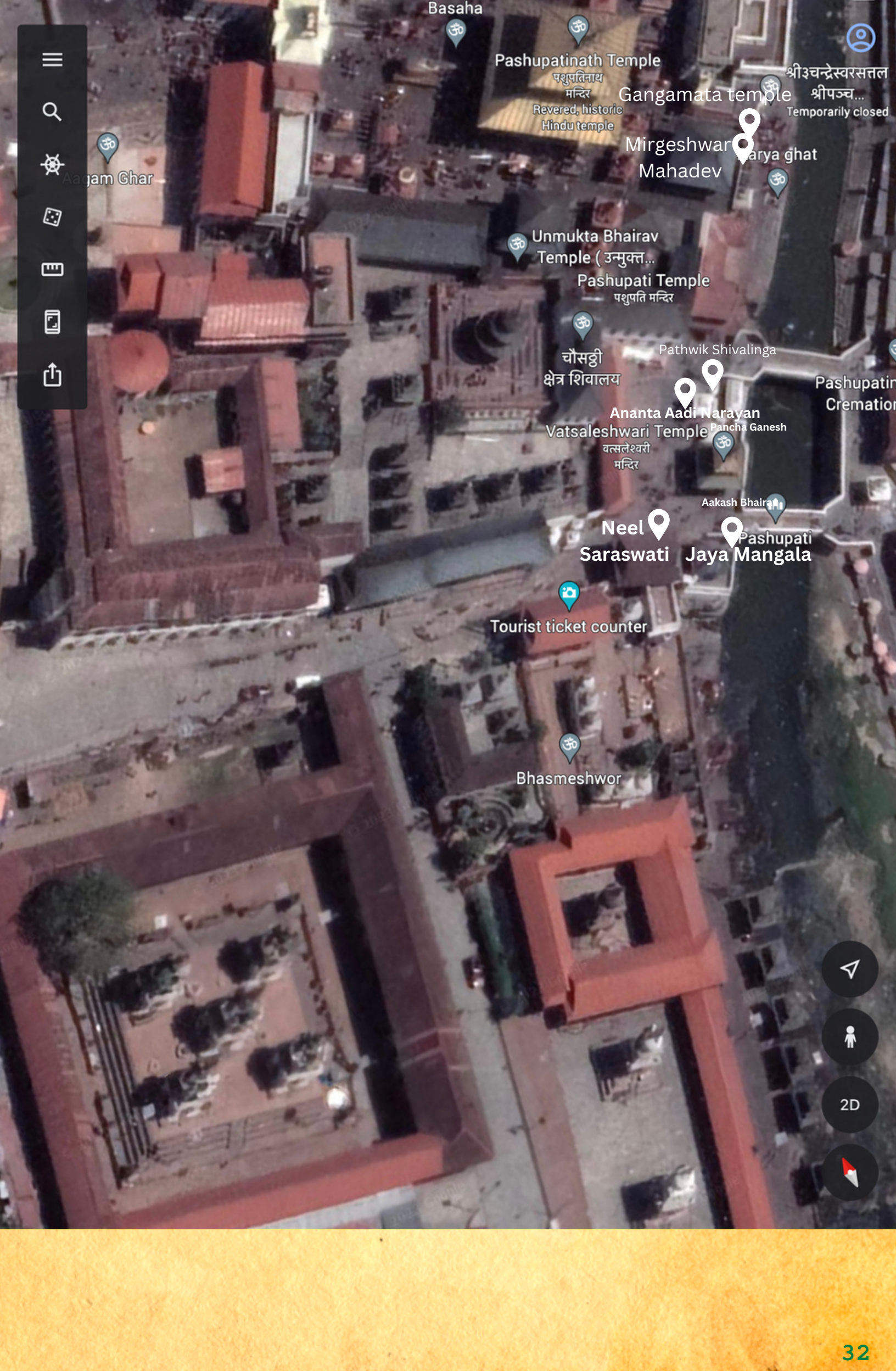
As per the legend, the Bagmati River originated from the tongue of Lord Shiva and is therefore considered as one of the holiest rivers of Nepal. The source of the river lies at Bagdwar in Shivapuri National Park, Kathmandu.





PART III





Basaha

Pashupatinath Temple
पशुपतिनाथ मन्दिर
Revered, historic Hindu temple

Gangamata temple
श्रीचन्द्रेश्वरसतल श्रीपञ्च...
Temporarily closed

Mirgeshwar Mahadev
Maha ghat

Unmukta Bhairav Temple (उन्मुक्त...)

Pashupati Temple
पशुपति मन्दिर

चौसठ्ठी क्षेत्र शिवालय

Pathwik Shivalinga

Ananta Aadi Narayan Vatsaleshwari Temple
वत्सलेश्वरी मन्दिर
Pancha Ganesh

Pashupati Crematorium

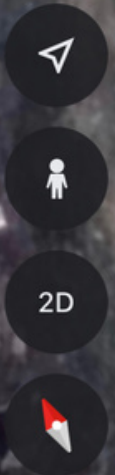
Neel Saraswati

Jaya Mangala

Aakash Bhairava

Tourist ticket counter

Bhasmeshwor



Batsaleshwari Shakti Peetha Area (बत्सलेश्वरी शक्ति पीठ)

Batsaleshwari holds significant importance as one of the revered Shakti Peethas within the Pashupatinath Temple premise. It stands as one of the most prominent sections within the Pashupatinath Temple area. Notably, this area is situated at the convergence point of nine distinct entrances, symbolizing its central position and significance within the temple complex.

Neel Saraswati (नील सरस्वती)

Neel Saraswati is another form of the goddess Saraswati. She is also regarded as Maha Saraswati



Batsaleshwari Temple (वत्सलेश्वरी मन्दिर)

This temple is believed to be older than the main Pashupatinath Temple and holds historical significance. It serves as the abode of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati. Unique in its architectural design, this temple lacks conventional doors. The reason behind its perpetually open state lies in the belief that various divine forces, encompassing deities, spirits, and supernatural entities, traverse through this sacred space. It is considered a channel or pathway for the passage of these diverse powers. Notably, this temple occupies the position of the first crematorium i.e., masanghat (मसानघाट) among the nine crematoriums of Pashupatinath.



Dev Dhara

Batsaleshwari is also revered as the fierce embodiment of Tripurasundari, encompassing the divine aspects of Mahakaali, Mahalaxmi, and Mahasaraswoti. Inside this temple, there is no conventional statue of any specific deity. Instead, a Sri Yantra is prominently placed, providing a sacred abode for every deity to reside.

In front of the temple, one can find various small statues depicting the vahana (sacred vehicles) associated with different deities, often including depictions of lions and Nandi.

Additionally, Batsaleshwari Temple holds immense significance as a Siddha Pitha (a revered seat of Tantra). It is believed that practitioners of Tantra must pay homage to this sacred place in order to attain "siddhi" or spiritual accomplishment. Thus, it serves as an essential pilgrimage site for spiritual practitioners engaging in Tantra sadhana (spiritual practice).

A momentous celebration takes place on the day following Pisach Chaturdashi. On this day, a grand procession gathers at Batsaleshwari Temple, bringing together the Guthiyars (temple trustees), Bhatta Pujaris (priests), and Bhandaris (temple caretakers) associated with Pashupatinath Temple. This joyous occasion marks a significant day of festivity and collective reverence.

Jambudwipa (जम्बूद्वीप)

The square-shaped tile situated in front of the temple holds profound significance as it is considered the center of the world. On the auspicious occasion of Chaitra Pisach Chaturdashi, which falls once a year, a funeral pyre, known as "chita," is ceremoniously lit at this precise location. Additionally, this day witnesses a grand jatra (procession) and the observance of Kaal Ratri puja (काल रात्री पूजा), further enhancing the significance of this sacred site. This day also holds profound meaning for practitioners of Tantra.



Cha hegau in Newari. Commonly known as Dev Dhara (देव धारा)

Among the various water sprouts within the Pashupatinath Temple, this particular dhara (sprout) stands out as a unique phenomenon that flows solely once a year. On the night of Pisach Chaturdashi, a significant spiritual event takes place as Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati are believed to grace this location with their presence. In reverence to this divine visitation, the doors of the temple are covered, and the interior is adorned with Jand (जाँड) and Rakshi (traditional alcoholic beverages) to create an environment conducive for the deities to enjoy the night. These offerings are allowed to flow the following morning.

To mark this auspicious occasion, Chyang, a fermented alcoholic beverage, is poured into the Dhara through the horn of Arna (a type of wild buffalo). As the dhara commences its flow, a gathering of devotees congregates below, as it is widely believed that bathing in this sacred water fulfills one's desires.

Aakash Bhairav (आकाश भैरव)

Aakash Bhairav, considered one of the most esteemed tantric figures, has a full-body statue located beside the Batsaleshwari Temple, while his head is situated in Indrachowk. It is believed that Aakash Bhairav attained siddhi (spiritual success) by appeasing the goddess Batsaleshwari. He is also regarded as a manifestation of Yalambar, the first king of the Kirat Dynasty.



Aakash Bhairav, renowned for his extraordinary abilities, possessed the foresight to predict the onset of the Mahabharata even before it occurred. Intrigued by the forthcoming war, he journeyed to Kurukshetra to witness the epic battle. Recognizing Aakash Bhairav's immense power and the potential for him to alter the course of the war if he participated, Lord Krishna devised a clever plan and requested his head, and without hesitation, Aakash Bhairav presented it to him. According to belief, Aakash Bhairav then observed the entirety of the Mahabharata from atop a hill, where Lord Krishna had placed him. After the war concluded, Aakash Bhairav's head returned to its rightful place in his palace located in Indrachowk, Kathmandu. Consequently, the head of Aakash Bhairav remains positioned in Indrachowk to this day. In other popular versions of the story, Aakash Bhairav is also called Barbarik.

The name "Aakash Bhairav" originates from the fact that his head was believed to have flown from the sky (Aakash) before landing in its present position.



Did You Know?

During his visit to Pashupati, Shankaracharya worshiped Batsaleshwari Devi, acquiring Tantra Shakti (spiritual power). He defeated Bandhu Dutta, who was the Tantrik of Pashupati at that time and introduced the practice of inviting Bhatta pujaris from India to perform rituals at the Pashupatinath Temple.



Pancha Ganesh (पञ्च गणेश)



Ananta Aadi Narayan (अनन्त आदि नारायण)

The statue of Lord Vishnu, known as Ananta Aadi Narayan, was crafted from baked clay. Legend has it that as the Pashupatinath Temple primarily venerates Lord Shiva, there were no existing statues of Lord Vishnu. To address this situation, it is believed that the Gandharvas swiftly constructed this temple overnight using baked clay. Notably, the backside of the statue features miniature sculptures depicting the family of Lord Shiva.



Mini Gosaikunda at Arya Ghat

The Arya Ghat houses a miniature version of Gosaikunda, as well as Matatirtha. During the auspicious occasion of Shrawan Purnima, a mela (fair) is held in Gosaikunda. Those unable to visit the actual Gosaikunda can worship the deity at the Gosaikunda located in Arya Ghat. Similarly, on Matatirtha Ausi (Mother's Day), people traditionally visit the Gokarna temple in Thankot for worship. However, if unable to reach that temple, they can instead worship at the Arya Ghat. The steps of Arya Ghat feature inscriptions of 108 tirthas (sacred pilgrimage sites).

According to belief, Ramnath Aghori, an accomplished practitioner of Tantra Vidya, is credited with organizing the previously unstructured Arya Ghat.

Jaya Mangala / Mangala Gauri (जय मंगला/ मंगला गौरी)

Jay Mangala, also known as Mangala Gauri, is considered a manifestation of the goddess Durga. Furthermore, she is associated with one of the nine Shakti Pithas of Pashupati. Within this context, there is a statue of Mahalaxmi standing on top of a tortoise.



Pathwik Shivalinga (पाथ्विक शिवलिङ्ग)

This is considered one of the oldest Shiva Lingas, and it is incredibly rare to find a Shiva Linga of this nature anywhere else.



Brahma naal (ब्रह्मनाल)

The sacred Brahma Naal is situated at the feet of Pashupatinath, and it is believed that the holy water of Pashupatinath flows here. It is believed that those who pass away at this location will attain Shiva Loka (the abode of Lord Shiva) after death.



Mrigheshwar Mahadev (मृगेश्वर महादेव)

The original manifestation of Pashupatinath was believed to be in the form of a deer. Within the temple, there is a statue of a hornless deer representing this early form. Interestingly, some individuals still regard this representation as the true essence of Pashupatinath, emphasizing its significance and reverence. This is also the temple that houses the famous statue of Birupakshya statue.



Mrigheshwar Mahadev

Temple of Ganga (गंगामाई मन्दिर)

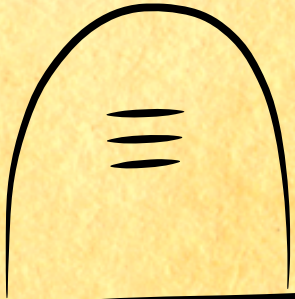
Initially, the temple did not possess a Gajur (pinnacle), but at a later stage, a Gajur in the shape of Sri Yantra was introduced. The red-colored apex visible within the temple represents the Sri Yantra. Additionally, in the month of Asar, a significant festival called Ganga Jatra (procession) is celebrated at this location. This statue houses the statue of Goddess Ganga at the center, the statue of Vedvyas on one side, and the statue of Lord Shiva and Parvati on the other side.



Temple of Ganga

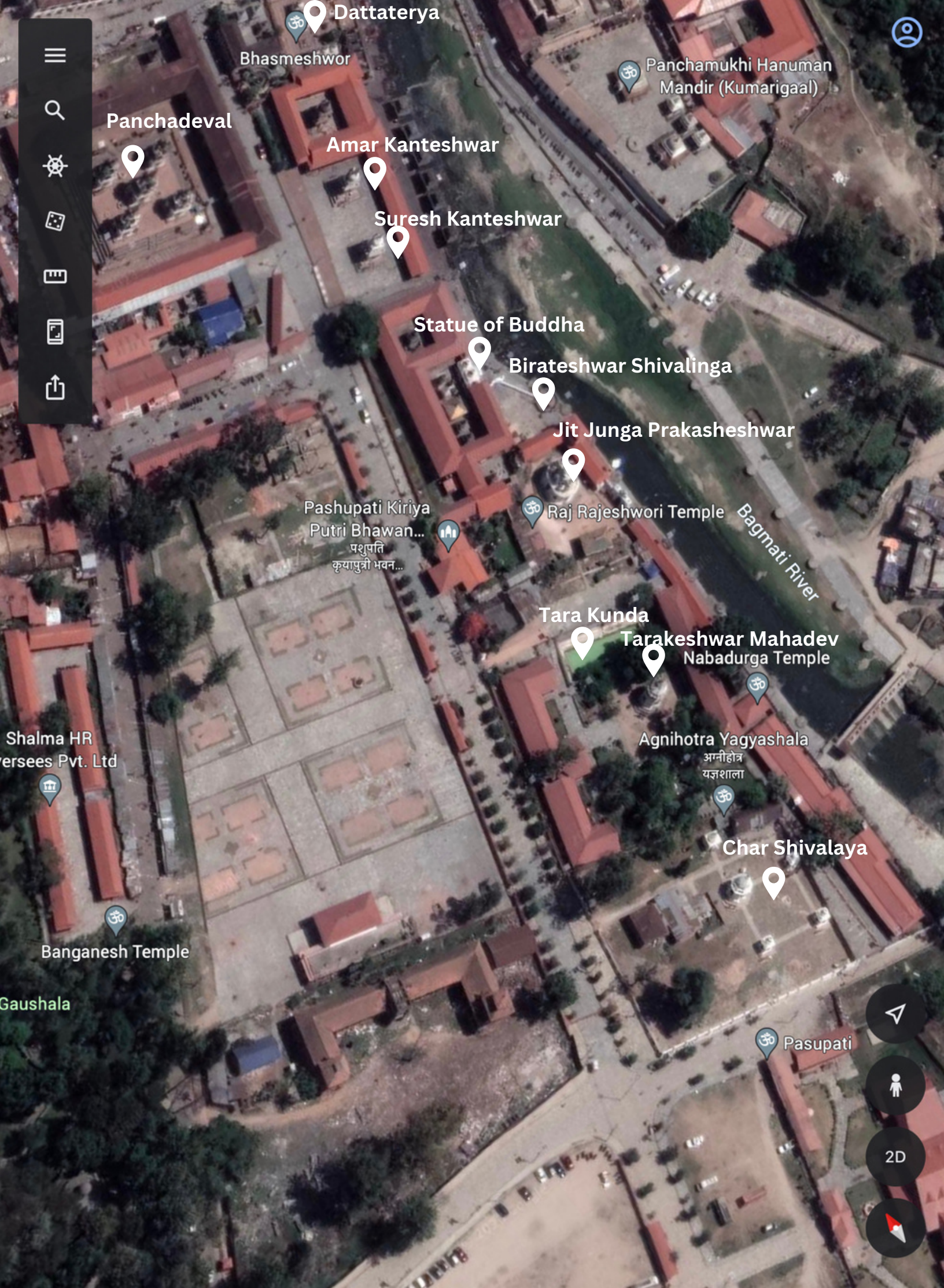


Birupakshya



PART IV





ॐ Dattatrya

Bhasmeshwor

ॐ Panchamukhi Hanuman Mandir (Kumarigaal)

Panchadeval

Amar Kanteshwar

Suresh Kanteshwar

Statue of Buddha

Birateshwar Shivalinga

Jit Junga Prakasheshwar

Pashupati Kiriya
Putri Bhawan...
पशुपति
कृयापुत्री भवन...

ॐ Raj Rajeshwori Temple

Bagmati River

Tara Kunda

Tarakeshwar Mahadev
Nabadurga Temple

Shalma HR
ersees Pvt. Ltd

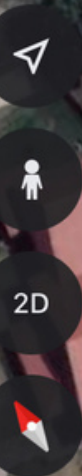
Agnihotra Yagyashala
अग्नीहोत्र
यज्ञशाला

ॐ Banganesh Temple

Char Shivalaya

Gaushala

ॐ Pasupati



Chandeshwor Mahadev Temple (चण्डेश्वर महादेव मन्दिर)

In the tradition of worship at Pashupatinath, it is customary to offer the same offerings to Chandeshwor Mahadev before offering them to Pashupatinath. Whether it is a humble offering of flowers or the grand feast known as maha bhog, everything is first offered to Chandeshwor Mahadev, and then subsequently offered to Pashupatinath.

Panchadeval (पंचदेवल)

The name "Panchadeval" is derived from the composition of five temples within its compound. In the Nepali language, "Pancha" means five. Moreover, the architectural feature of this temple includes a window crafted from an elephant's tusk.



The Panchadeval Premise is surrounded by sattals (covered shelters or pavilions) constructed in all four directions. These sattals initially served as Paksala (community kitchen), providing meals to impoverished and needy individuals. Over time, the Panchadeval Paksala extended its services to offer shelter and sustenance to homeless and vulnerable women. Since 2032 BS (1975 AD), it has been transformed into a Briddha Ashram, serving as an old age home for both men and women.

The Fives in Panchadeval

In the northern section of the temple, you can find a collection of five trishuls (tridents), five east-facing Nandi statues, and five statues of Chandeshwar Mahadev. Originally, these statues of Chandeshwar Mahadev were placed by constructing a bedi (tall platform), but currently, the one that was located in the center has been relocated to the northwestern direction of the temple. In its place, a Tulasi math (sacred basil plant) is now kept.

Udasi Akhada (उदासी अखडा)

Udasi Akhada is present in the Bhasmeshwar Ghat premises. It is the current tourist ticketing center. It houses the religious scripture of Sikhism, Guru Granth Sahib.



Bhasmeshwar Ghat (भस्मेश्वर घाट)

Bhasmeshwar Ghat houses Shivalinga representing Bhasmeshwar Mahadev and this shivalinga is recognized as one of the nine Jyotirlingas/Siddhalingas in the Pashupatinath Area, adding to its esteemed spiritual significance.

Bhasma is the ash obtained after the cremation of human bodies. At Bhasmeshwar Ghat, one can find the oldest stone inscription associated with the revered Pashupatinath Temple. The name "Bhasmeshwar Ghat" is attributed to the presence of Bhasmeshwar Mahadev, who is believed to reside in this location. According to popular belief, if the ashes from a cremated body come into contact with the Bhasmeshwar Shivalinga, the individual attains "Mukti " or liberation. Hence, the Shivalinga at this site is placed in an exposed area.

Furthermore, it is widely believed that the Shivalinga at Bhasmeshwar Ghat originated from the sacred ashes ("bhasma") of the bodies cremated in this vicinity. This connection serves as another basis for its appellation as Bhasmeshwar Mahadev.

The small houses nearby are made for passersby or for ascetics and saints to take a rest.



Bhasmeshwar Mahadev (भस्मेश्वर महादेव)



The Well

In past, the water from Bagmati River used to be used for daily bath of the pashupatinath shivalinga. But, now since the river has become extremely polluted, the water from this well is used to bath the shiva linga, and its premises is kept locked for rest of the times.



Amar Kanteshwar Mahadev and Suresh Kanteshwar Mahadev



Amar Kanteshwar Ghat



Birateshwar Shivalinga

A large slanted Shiva lingam placed on a covered well, considered one of the largest in the Pashupatinath area.



Statue of Buddha

A statue of Lord Buddha, originally from the 7th century A.D., was once present but has been replaced by a newer statue with a similar appearance.



Taleju Temple

The Taleju Bhawani deity in this temple is worshiped by the pujaris (priests) who perform daily prayers at the Jay Bageshwari Temple. Additionally, when the Nava Durga Naach (dance) from Bhaktapur is brought here, this Devi is also worshiped.

Bhatta Niwas (भट्ट निवास)

Located directly north of the Nirmal Akhada, this particular site is strictly off-limits to visitors. It serves as the exclusive residence for the third and fourth-ranked Bhatta Pujaris of the esteemed Pashupatinath temple.



Nirmal Akhada (निर्मल अखडा)

Nirmal Akhada lies near the Rajarajeshwari Premise, and it has the temple of Guru Granth Sahib.



Rajarajeshwari Premises (राजराजेश्वरी परिसर)

The Rajarajeshwari is situated south of the Bhasmeshwar Ghat, on the banks of the Bagmati River and is recognized as one of the nine Shakti Pithas located within the vicinity of Pashupatinath. At this sacred site, there is an inclined Shiva Linga, known as Birateshwar Mahadev, positioned on a well, believed to possess the ability to reveal glimpses of the future. According to the temple's Abhilekh (historical records), it was built by King Jaydharma Malla and King Jayjyoti Malla.

The name Rajrajeshwari refers to Tripurasundari, one of the ten Mahavidyas, but the Rajrajeshwari present in this temple is the Shakti Pitha of Nava Durga: Shailaputri, Brahmacharini, Chandraghanta, Kushmanda, Skandamata, Katyayini, Kalratri, Mahagauri, and Siddhidatri.

Within the courtyard of the Raj Rajeshwari Temple, you can find several artifacts, including Simha (lion), Dhuni/yagna Kunda, kumar, and Krishna statue.



Jit Junga Prakasheshwar Deval

This temple, built by Jitjunga, the son of Junga Bahadur, contains twelve Shiva lingams.



Tara Kunda

It is one of the nine kundas of the Pashupat Area. This kunda is present in the south of Rajrajeshwar Premises, inside the area separated to home the Kriyaputris (क्रियापुत्री).



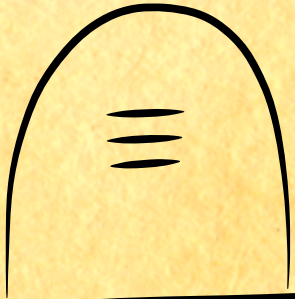
Tarakeshwar Mahadev



Char Shivalaya (4 शिवालय) and Agnihotrashala (अग्निहोत्रशाला)

South of the Raj Rajeshwari Temple, you will find the Char Shivalaya (four Shiva temples) and Agnihotrashala (fire ritual area). The four Shiva temples—Janga Mukteshwar, Jagat Mukteshwar, Rana Mukteshwar, and Baal Mukteshwar—were constructed in 1845 by Bir Shamsar. The Agnihotrashala consists of five Yagya Shalas (fire ritual areas) where daily yagya (sacrificial ceremonies) and homa (fire rituals) are performed both in the morning and evening.





PART V





Bagmati River

Kirateshwar Mahadev
किरातेश्वर
महादेव

Shree pancha
Satya sanatan kuti

Bagmati River

Uma Kunda
उमा कुण्ड

सूर्यघाट, पशुपति

Pashupati Kailash
Maha Hawan...
पशुपति कैलाश
महा हवन (महेन्द्र...

Kathmandu nepal

Baasukinath Temple
बासुकीनाथ
मन्दिर

Bhuteshwar Mahadev
भुतेश्वर महादेव

Pashupatinath Temple
पशुपतिनाथ
मन्दिर
Revered, historic
Hindu temple

Saraswati Temple
सरस्वती मन्दिर

Bagmati River

Suryaghat (सुर्यघाट)

Suryaghat lies behind the Bagmati River and is known for its multiple caves, namely Durga Cave, Tilopa Cave, and Naropa Cave. Two different caves Tilopa and Naropa, are considered holy sites because this cave is the place where Naropa received training and teaching from his Guru Tilopa and he had visions of Vajrayogini here.

Various Aghoris have conducted their spiritual practices in these caves. There is a Shiva Linga within the area known as Bijayashwor Shivalinga. It is named so as it was installed by Princess Bijayawati, the daughter of King Mandev and Queen Bhogini. The first coin of Nepal, known as Mananka, was introduced by King Mandev. During the full moon (Purnima), a fair (mela) is organized at this site.



Did You Know?

The Pashupatinath area has witnessed the spiritual practices (sadhana) of numerous dharma gurus from various religions. Disciples of Guru Nanak, Buddhist Dharma Gurus, followers of Mahavira, Jain practitioners, Nagas, Nath Panthis, Vaishnavs, Ramanujans, and many others consider Pashupatinath as their supreme deity (Ishtadev).

Kirateshwar Mahadev (किरातेश्वर महादेव)

The Kirateshwar Mahadev temple has a captivating legend associated with Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati. It is believed that Lord Shiva disguised himself as a Kirat, a commoner, and ventured into the Sleshmantak forest. Goddess Parvati, his consort, assumed the form of a Kiratini and followed him. She dedicatedly meditated in the Gauri Ghat area for over a thousand years, intently observing Lord Shiva's mannerisms. When they finally encountered each other, they decided to remain together in the Sleshmantak den and established a temple to practice their shared principles of worship. The temple was aptly named Kirateshwar Mahadev, signifying the divine meeting in their Kirat and Kiratini forms.



According to Hindu mythology, Lord Shiva challenges Arjuna to a duel in his Kirat form. Impressed by Arjuna's skills, Lord Shiva reveals his true identity and grants him a Divyastra (a divine weapon) called Pashupatastra.



Gaurighat, where Kirateshwor Mahadev is located, is also home to the "Sangeet Ashram" established in 2048. This institution serves as a platform for talented musicians from Nepal and around the world to showcase their artistry during the full moon performances.

Furthermore, Kirateshwor Mahadev is one of the nine jyotirlingas, elevating its significance and sanctity. To prevent individuals from circumambulating the Shivalinga, a bar is placed, as it is believed that rotating the Shivalinga in a complete circle is not appropriate.

Kailash Dada (कैलाश डाँडा)

It is believed that Kailash Dada was once part of Sleshmantak Forest. Previously, the Bagmati River was believed to have a different route from the Gaurighat. After many years, the Bagmati made its way out of the middle of the Sleshmantak forest, separating the Sleshmantak forest from the Kailash Dada. Its area is more than 100 Ropani. Kailash Dada consists of 9 Shivalingas and 1 Jyotirlinga (among the 9 Jyotirlinga in Pashupati Kshetra). In the middle of the ground, there is a giant Shiva linga called the Parvateshwar Shiva linga.

The place is associated with several stories and legends. According to one of them, it is believed that Lord Shiva first stayed in this place while visiting the Pashupat Khshetra from Mount Kailash. So, the place is regarded as the Kailash Dada; it is also called the Shiva Dham or Mini Mount Kailash.

Kailash Dada has great religious and cultural connections. During the month of Mansir, during Bala Chaturdashi, a mela is held on the ground. On other days, Hindu rituals like Bratabandha, Hom, and other programs are performed on Kailash Dada. A few years ago, in 2072 BS, the Mahayagna called Pitru Yagya was held in memory of the dead. On the east of Kailash Dada, there is a Radha Krishna temple, where people worship the deities during Krishna Janmashtami. Also, the Kailash Dada comprises a building named Bishwo Shanti Sangha, established in 2016 BS. This sacred place holds a resemblance to Devpatan, as the presence of a Shiva linga can be discovered by digging anywhere within its vicinity.



Uma Kunda (उमा कुण्ड)

Located on the northern side of Kailash Dada, near Gaurighat, lies Kailash Uma Kunda, the bathing spot of goddess Parvati. It is believed that during Shiva and Parvati's Mrigrasthali visit, Mata Parvati performed her tapasya and bathing rituals at Uma Kunda. Hence, it earned the name Kailash Uma Kunda.

In the vicinity of this Kunda, you can find the ashram of Swargadwari Baba, along with his statue, where one of his disciples currently resides. Hindu religious ceremonies like Bratabandha (sacred thread ceremony) and hom (fire ritual) are conducted at Uma Kunda.

Close to the entrance of the Kunda, there is a stone representing the presence of Hemanta Bhairav, one of the most powerful forms of Bhairav, serving as the embodiment of Kshetrapal (guardian deity) of the area.



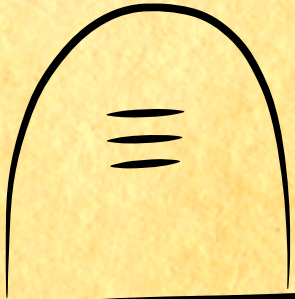
Gauri Ghat (गौरी घाट)

Gaurighat carries immense historical and religious significance. It was at this sacred site that Parvati, in her quest to marry Lord Shiva, performed her bathing and meditation rituals. During the month of Magh, Gaurighat becomes a renowned destination for ceremonial bathing in the purifying waters of the Bagmati River. It is believed that women who partake in this ritual are blessed with the possibility of finding a compatible life partner.



Additionally, a sculpture of Ganesh was erected on the opposite bank after someone had a visionary dream emphasizing the necessity of Ganesh's presence in that location. Furthermore, Gaurighat is also home to a temple dedicated to Narsingheshwor.





PART VI





5 Shivalayas

Pasupatinath forest

Guhyeshwari
Shaktipeeth Temple
श्री गुह्येश्वरी
शक्तिपीठ...
7th-century Hindu
temple with pond

Mrigasthali

Yogi Narharinath Samadi

Shree nath ji ki samadhi

Gorakhnath Temple -
गोरखनाथ मन्दिर...
गोरखनाथ मन्दिर

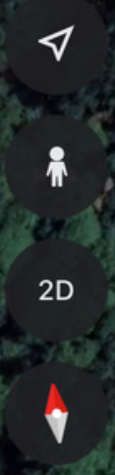
Mrigasthali Shivalayas

Shiva Shrine

Mata manokama
nath aaghor aasram

Bishowrup Mandir

Bahira Ganesh



Guheshwori Shakti Peetha (गुहेश्वरी शक्ति पीठ)

Goddess Guheshwari is regarded as a manifestation of Goddess Taleju Bhawani and is venerated as the Kuldevi of the Shah Kings of Nepal. The primary deity is enshrined in Guheshwari Temple, while a similar sculpture is kept in the Taleju Bhawani temple at Kathmandu Durbar Square. According to a belief, Guhyeshwari Temple is believed to be the site where Sati's hips or hind part fell. It is crucial to clarify that the term "guhya" is often misunderstood as referring to Sati's genitals, but in this context, it signifies a distinct aspect. Guhya also means secret or mysterious. Another interpretation suggests that Guhyeshwari Temple symbolizes the spot where both knees of the goddess landed, establishing its significance as a Shakti Peetha.

Due to its former existence as a pond, the deity here is displayed in an open area without a covering or pinnacle. Instead, Shesh Naag (the serpent deity) is positioned in all four directions, symbolizing the pond ecosystem.



The Kunda (pond) and the statue were originally located at this site, but the current structure of the temple was built by King Pratap Malla. One distinctive feature of this temple is its unique combination of seven windows, which is unparalleled elsewhere. These windows were crafted by Nesha Sayami, a group of skilled artisans known as Manandhar Guthiyars. The Manandhar community also considers Guheshwari as their Kuldevi and worships her at this temple.

Did You Know?

The Pashupatinath area has witnessed the spiritual practices (sadhana) of numerous dharma gurus from various religions. Disciples of Guru Nanak, Buddhist Dharma Gurus, followers of Mahavira, Jain practitioners, Nagas, Nath Panthis, Vaishnavs, Ramanujans, and many others consider Pashupatinath as their supreme deity (Ishtadev).

Nath Tradition (नाथ परम्परा)

The Nath tradition is a sect within Hinduism that traces its roots back to ancient times. It is associated with the Nath yogis, a group of renunciates(संन्यासी) and ascetics(तपस्वी) who follow the teachings of Gorakhnath, a legendary figure and one of the 84 Mahasiddhas (great accomplished masters) in the Nath tradition. According to the Nath tradition, its customs and practices predate the influence of Gorakhnath; however, the movement experienced its most significant growth and development under the guidance and inspiration of Gorakhnath.

The Nath yogis emphasize the development of physical and mental strength, breath control, meditation, and the awakening of the dormant spiritual energy known as Kundalini (a form of divine energy believed to be located at the base of the spine).

Gorakhnath Temple (गोरखनाथ मन्दिर)

Guru Gorakhnath holds a revered position both as a mahayogi and guru. He is also known as Goraksha and is considered as yoga avatar of Lord Shiva. He is worshiped as the “cherished divinity” Ishta Devata of Nepal. In yogic traditions, guru Gorakhnath is revered as the progenitor and proponent of hatha yoga, Nada yoga, sabar vidya. He has also authored celebrated texts such as Siddhasiddhanta Paddhati, Gorakh Bodh, Gorakhvaani, etc.

Known for his yogic expertise in various Tantric and Vedic practices, Guru Gorakhnath once visited Kathmandu during his travels. Unfortunately, he observed the misuse of tantric practices and was also met with apathy and disrespect from the local population and the then royal family. To make them realize their mistakes and establish dharma, Guru Gorakhnath entered on a twelve-year long Samadhi. As per the legend, he gathered all the Nagas (mystical serpents) from the surrounding areas that were supposed to cause rain. This led to a drought and scarcity of rain in the Kathmandu Valley.

Witnessing the distress caused by the absence of rain, the king of the Kathmandu valley, upon the advice of other tantrics, reached out to Machindranath, the revered Guru of Gorakhnath, seeking his intervention. Upon Machindranath's arrival, Guru Gorakhnath, in a display of respect and obedience, stood up to touch his guru's feet and released all the snakes he had gathered. The natural balance was restored and the rainfall happened once again.



This significant event became the foundation for the enduring celebration of the Macchindranath Jatra, a festival dedicated to honoring Machindranath's arrival. Even today, a huge number of people in Kathmandu actively participate in this celebration, which serves as a reminder of the profound connection between Guru Gorakhnath's penance, the return of rain, and the esteemed presence of Machindranath.



The renowned temple complex, constructed under the patronage of Jayasthiti Malla, comprises several temples including Manakamana, Bhairav, and Shikhar-style structures reminiscent of Badrinath and Kedarnath. In total, there are approximately 16 temples within this complex.

This temple complex is inhabited by Nath yogis. Baisakh Sukla Purnima is known as Gorakh Purnima as well as Buddha Purnima. On this day, a grand worship of Guru Gorakhnath happens in the temple and Nath yogis offer Rot to Guru Gorakhnath. Rot is the favorite offering to Guru Gorakhnath.

Apart from this, Nath yogis also worship a deity known as Patra Devata. Every year, during the auspicious occasion of Guru Purnima, the process of celebrating Nepal's national festival, Dashain, begins. To inaugurate the festivities, Patra Devata is taken in a grand procession from Mrigasthali to the Gorakhnath Peeth situated at Hanuman Dhoka where it is kept until the Ekadashi of Janai Purnima. On the day of Janai Purnima, Patra Devata is taken on a pilgrimage to Gosainkunda, where an elaborate worship ceremonies are performed at all the pilgrimage sites surrounding the lake. After completing the pilgrimage and the worship rituals, the idol is brought back to Hanuman Dhoka in Kathmandu. It remains there for a few days before being taken to Dakshinkali, another important religious site in Nepal. Finally, on Indira Ekadashi, it is brought back to Mrigasthali. This marks the official beginning of the Dashain festival.

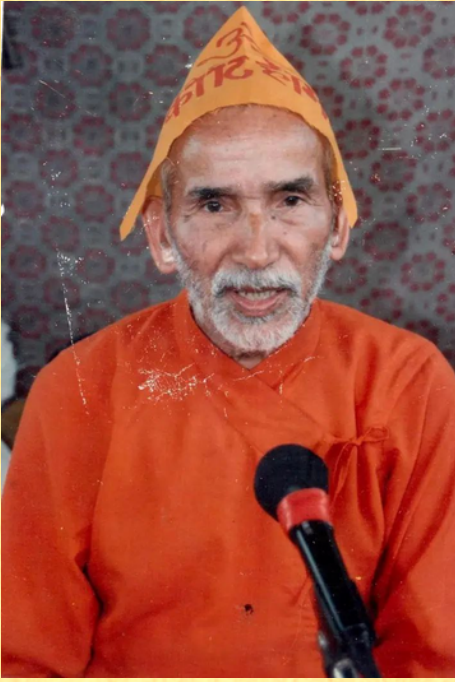


Gorakhnath Akhand Dhuni (गोरखनाथ अखण्ड धुनी)



Yogi Naraharinath Ashram (योगी नरहरिनाथ आश्रम)

Yogi Naraharinath, born on 17th Falgun 1971 as Balbir Singh Hriksen Thapa, was a notable Nepali historian, writer, saint, and yogi of the highest order. He was appointed as the Mahant Yogi of Gorakhnath Math by the then Prime Minister Shri 3 Mohan Shamsheer and is also considered as the Rashtraguru (the national guru) of Nepal. However, his contributions extend far beyond the boundaries of the nation.



One of Yogi Naraharinath's remarkable achievements was his prolific writing career. During his lifetime, he has written more than 600 books (not all were published and most of which have been lost), covering a diverse range of topics which include history, Nath philosophy, archaeology, geography, and spirituality. Some of his notable works include Itihasma Sandhipatra Sangraha, Shikharini Yatra, Vansavalis, Divya Upadesh, etc. He knew as many as 28 different languages. Through his extensive body of work, he aimed to bring awareness about the glorious history of Nepal and Himavat Khanda. In his writings, Yogi Naraharinath also delved into the etymological roots of various words from languages around the world, tracing them back to the Hindu tradition. His research and analysis aimed to reveal the linguistic and cultural connections between different nations and highlight the shared heritage and influences across civilizations. Throughout his life, he performed 129 Koti Homas and Shiva Yagnas across different parts of Nepal as well as in India.

Yogi Naraharinath spent his entire life advocating for the the sovereignty of Nepal and inspiring the youths, public, and authorities to serve the country. He crisscrossed Nepal and various parts of India a number of times. He was also known as "The Walking Pashupatinath". His work has made a significant contribution to our knowledge of our history and culture and is an invaluable resource for the spiritual world and the human race. He took Mahasamadhi at the age of 88 on 13th Falgun, 2059 B.S at the Gorakhnath premise of Mrigasthali, Kathmandu.

Yogi Naraharinath Library (योगी नरहरिनाथ पुस्तकालय)



Yogi Narahariath Samadhi (योगी नरहरिनाथ समाधि)



Ashram of Swami Prapannacharya (स्वामी प्रपन्नाचार्य आश्रम)

Swami Prapannacharya was a renowned scholar of eastern philosophy and vedas who spent his life at his ashram in Mrigasthali, Pashupati area. Coming from a Rai family with an exceptional thirst for knowledge, he faced great challenges and hardships to attain education at a time when education was considered to be the sole right of Brahmins. He authored more than 50 books, including 'Ved Ma Ke Chha ?' As an illiterate young man, he left home for India in search of knowledge at the age of 30 and his devotion to research and study earned him PhD in Eastern philosophy and Vedas. He returned to Nepal at the age of 60 and served the nation from his front.



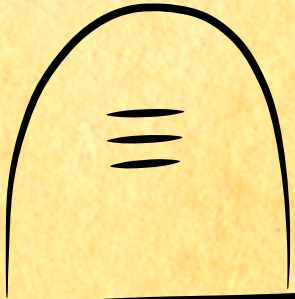
Manakamana Temple (मनकामना मन्दिर)



Bishwarupa Temple (बिश्वरुपा मन्दिर)

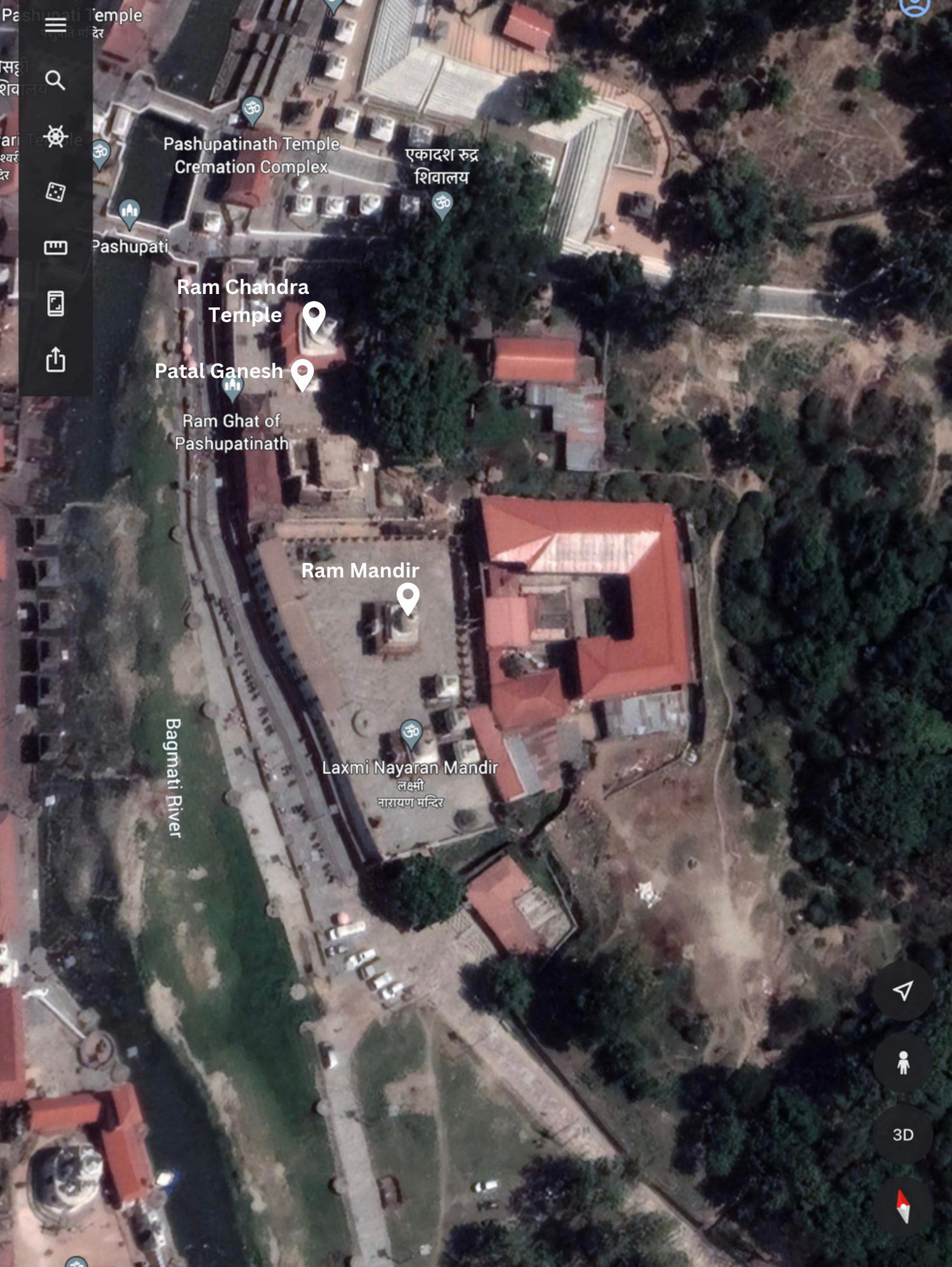
This temple contains the Vishwaroop [universal form] of Shiva and goddess Parvati with 10,000 hands and heads. It is home to giant statues of lord Shiva and goddess Parvati, which are taller than 12 feet and are made up of Asta Dhatu (a mixture of eight metals). It was built by the then prime minister of Nepal Sri Tin Junga Bahadur Rana with an expense of nearly 2 lakh Nepalese Rupees. This temple was destroyed by the earthquake in 2072 BS and is currently under reconstruction.





PART VII





Pashupatinath Temple
शिव मंदिर

सप्तशिव शिवालय

शिव मंदिर

शिव मंदिर

Pashupatinath Temple
Cremation Complex

एकादश रुद्र
शिवालय

Ram Chandra
Temple

Patal Ganesh

Ram Ghat of
Pashupatinath

Ram Mandir

Laxmi Nayaran Mandir
लक्ष्मी
नारायण मन्दिर

Bagmati River

Navigation icons: location pin, person, 3D, compass

Ram Temple Premises (राम मन्दिर परिसर)

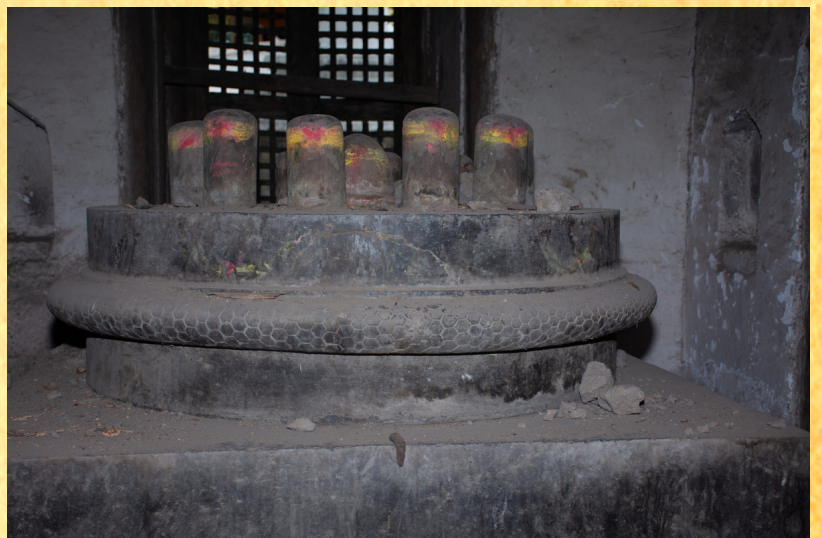
Ramchandra Temple (रामचन्द्र मन्दिर)

This premise has a huge temple of Ram Chandra. There are statues of Garuda, Hanuman (on a raised platform), and Ganesh in front of this temple. This temple only opens early in the morning for daily puja, and it is locked afterward. This is because, in the past, lots of jewelry and valuable statues of the god were stolen from this temple.



Ekadash Rudra Shivalaya (एकादशरुद्र शिवालय)

This Shivalaya houses a unique shiva linga, which has 11 lingams on a common jalhari, that's what gives it its name. The 11 lingas signify the 11 supreme Rudras.



Ram Temple (राम मन्दिर)

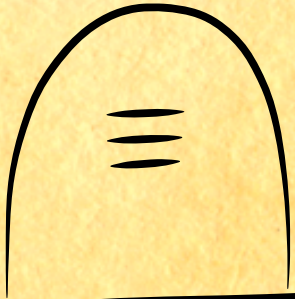
Moving south from the ram chandra temple, there is another temple of Sri Ram, which houses the statue of the family of Lord Ram. There are the statues of Lord Ram, Goddess Sita, Laxman, Hanuman, Luv and Kush.



Laxminarayan Temple (लक्ष्मीनारायण मन्दिर)

In the south of the Ram temple with the family of Lord Ram, there is a Laxmi Narayan Temple, which houses the statue of Lord Bishnu and Goddess Laxmi. There is a statue of Garud in front of this temple.





PART VIII



Jaya Bageshwari Area (जय बागेश्वरी क्षेत्र)

The main temple of Jaya Bageshwari was initially constructed by King Shiva Dev. According to legend, the appearance of Lord Pashupatinath and Devi Guheshwari in the area led to the manifestation of the goddess Jaybageshwari in the form of a Shakti Pitha. She arrived secretly from Mansarovar Lake near Kailash Parvat. King Shiva Dev later transformed the Shakti Pitha into a statue.

A painting depicting a huge form of Bhairav is also present on the Northern Wall of the temple. During the Lichchhavi period, it was King Amshuvarma who established the tradition of periodically painting Bhairav on the temple's walls every 12 years.



Painting of Bhairav

Did You Know?

During the Lichchhavi period, it was King Amshuvarma who established the tradition of periodically painting Bhairav on the temple's walls every 12 years.

Vertical Stone Spout (ठडिएको ढुङ्गे धारा)

In the Jaya Bageshwari area, one can find several Hitis in an erect position. These Hitis are intentionally placed in the area to ensure timely rainfall and maintain favorable agricultural conditions. By strategically positioning these Hitis, the flow of water is controlled in a way that facilitates the right amount of rainfall at the appropriate time, benefiting the surrounding land and supporting agricultural activities. There are two such structures on either sides, in front of the Jay Bageshwari Temple.



Surya Temple (सुर्य मन्दिर)

Situated in the north-western direction of the Jay Bageshwari Temple, this temple features a shikhar-style architecture.

The primary deity for which this temple was originally constructed remains unknown due to the loss of its main statue. However, the intricately carved figures of Devis on the temple walls and the Toran (a kind of doorway ornamentation) embellishing the main door indicate that it may have been dedicated to the goddesses. Conversely, the chariot-like structure of the entire temple suggests it could have been a temple honoring Lord Surya, the Sun God. Currently, a statue of Surya is housed within this temple.



Sundhara(Luhiti)

Sundhara (Luhiti) is recognized as one of the ancient Hitis, known for its historical significance. This Hiti (stone spout) houses a multitude of artworks that date back to the Lichhavi Period, showcasing the rich artistic heritage of that era. Adjacent to this Hiti, on one side, you can find an inscription (अभिलेख) from the reign of King Jayasthiti Malla, further adding to the historical value of the site.



Dhanvantari Temple (धन्वन्तरी मन्दिर)

At the entrance of the Hiti, you will find two temples constructed in the elegant Shikhar style. On the right side stands the Dhanvantari Temple, dedicated to the deity Dhanvantari. According to ancient scriptures, Dhanvantari is revered as the God of Ayurveda, representing healing and medicine. On the left side, you will see the Laxmi Narayan Temple, devoted to the divine pair of Laxmi and Narayan.

This statue of Dhanvantari with four hands is a rare find because his statue is not easily found in Nepal.



Dhanvantari Temple

Laxmi Narayan Temple (लक्ष्मीनारायण मन्दिर)

The Laxmi Narayan Temple, constructed in the year 1660 B.S., holds a fascinating aspect regarding the statues of Goddess Laxmi and Lord Narayan within its premises. These statues were meticulously crafted in accordance with the descriptions provided in the ancient text known as the Hemadri Vratkhanda (हेमाद्री व्रतखण्ड). Similarly, the remaining statues present in the temple were also sculpted based on the details outlined in the same text.

Moreover, adorning the walls of this temple are intricately carved statues portraying the ten avatars of Lord Vishnu.



Laxmi Narayan Temple

Statue relating to the Birth of Lord Buddha

In the Jaya Bageshwori area, a statue depicting the birth of Lord Buddha was unearthed, dating back to the 9th century A.D. To ensure its safeguarding and preservation, the original statue currently resides in the National Museum at Chhauni. In its place, a meticulously crafted replica of the statue was created and now stands in the Jaya Bageshwori area. This replica was specifically constructed in 2056 BS, faithfully capturing the essence of the original statue.



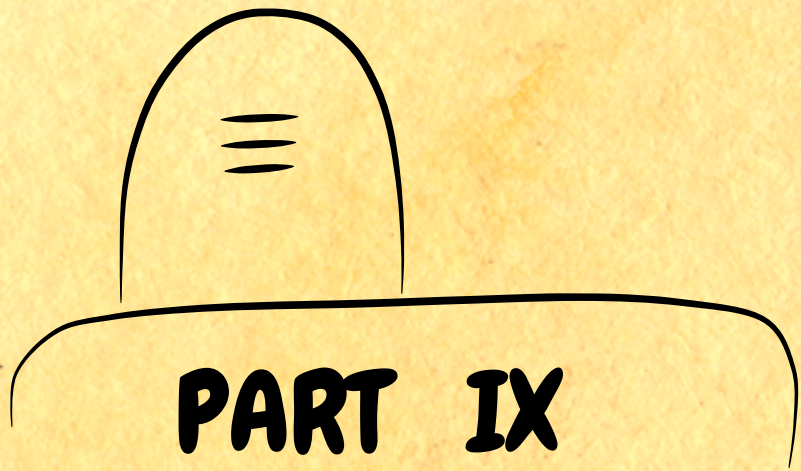
Sridhar Vishnu (श्रीधर विष्णु)

Located in the eastern direction of the Hiti, towards the southern part of a house, there is a Deval (a small temple or shrine). This Deval houses a remarkable artistic statue of Sridhar Vishnu in a standing position. Flanking the statue, there is a Garuda (Vishnu's Vahana- the eagle) positioned on the right side and goddess Laxmi on the left side.



Krishna Temple (कृष्ण मन्दिर)





PART IX



Pingalasthan (पिंगलास्थान)

Pingalasthan lies at the southernmost border of the Pashupati area. Because of the construction of Chakrapath road in 2033 BS, the temple now lies under the bridge. The temple has the statue of Pingaladevi (Bajreshwari), and a few other broken idols of various gods and goddesses such as Narashimha, Nandi, Hanuman, etc.



Tilganga (तिलगंगा)

Tilganga lies to the south of the Pashupatinath Area. The famous 16th-century idol of Vishnu Vikranta. The idol is found to belong to the times of King Mandev as written in the stone inscription. The idol is a fine work of sculpture that portrays the Vamana avatara of Vishnu as Trivikram. These idols and inscriptions are significant from an archeological point of view as they show the advancement of the sculptors even in that period.



Tri-Bikram 's Idol

Bankali Temple (बनकाली मन्दिर)

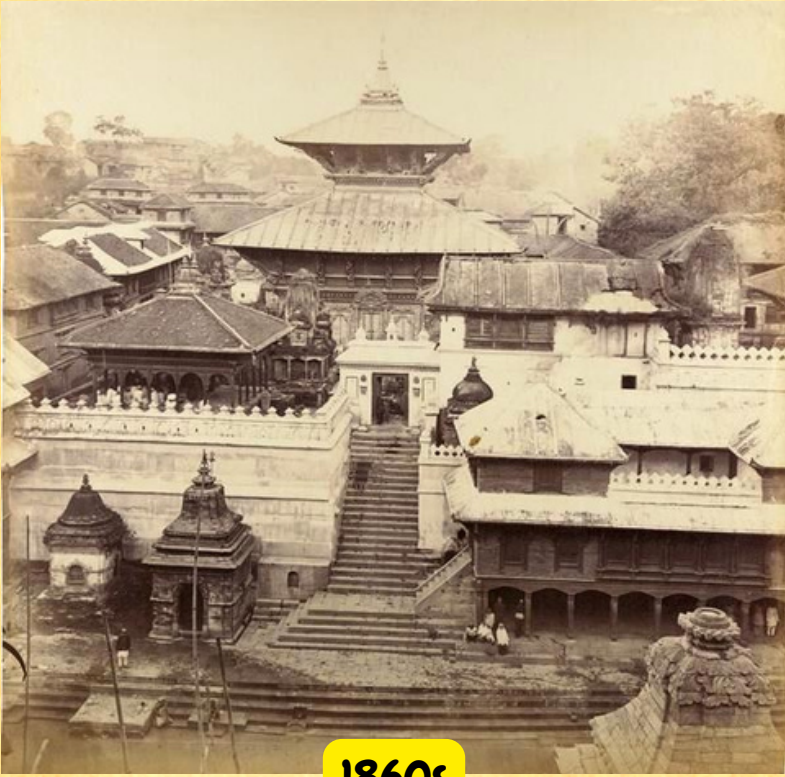
The Bankali temple was reconstructed by King Mahendra in 2015 BS. Unlike other temples, this temple doesn't have a roof. The sky is considered as the roof of the temple. Inside the temple, there is a Bhairav idol. The devi here is worshiped using Tantric rituals by the Karmacharyas.



Ban Ganesh (वन गणेश)



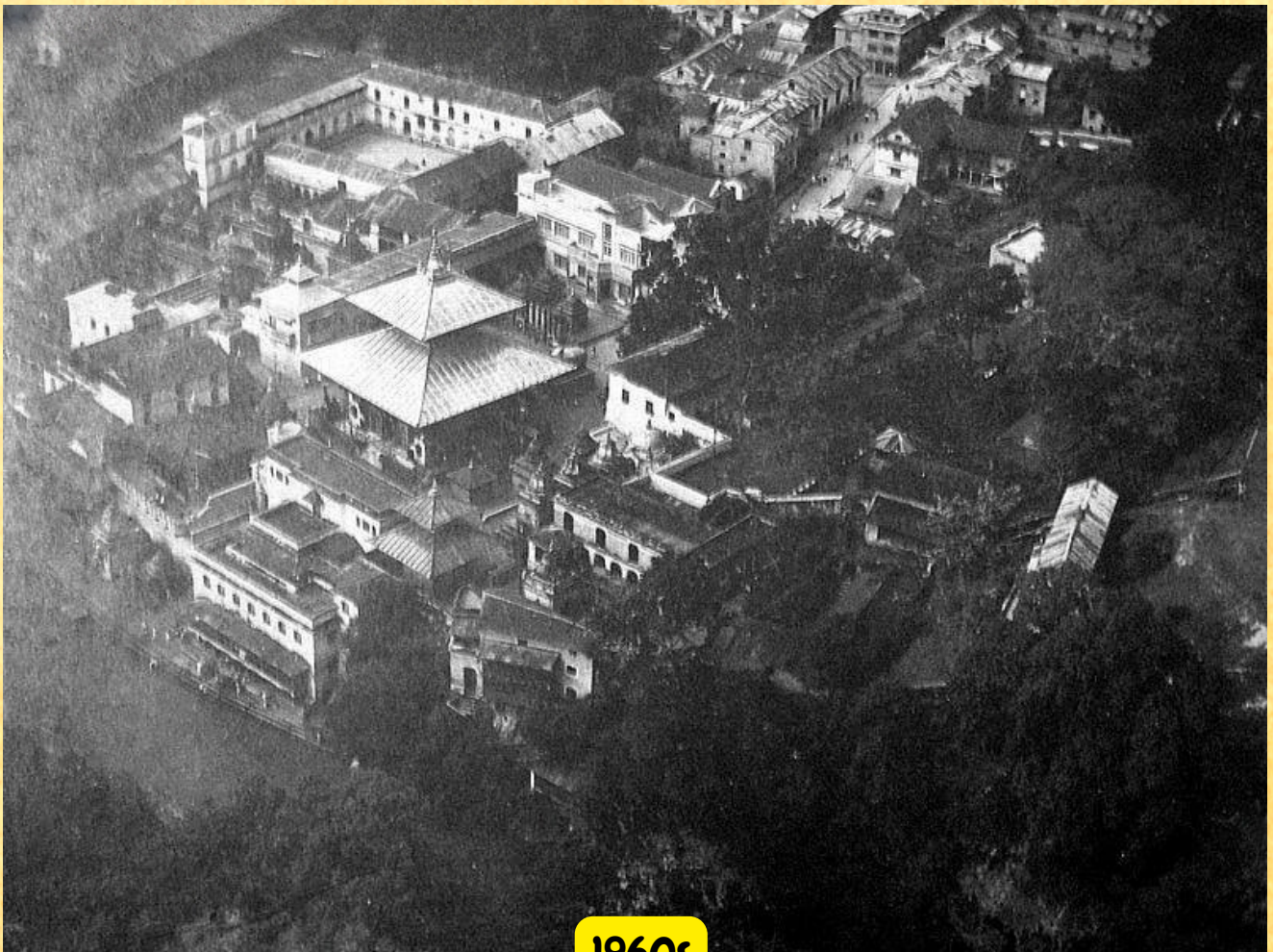
Old Photos of the Pashupatinath (पशुपतिनाथका केहि पुराना तस्विरहरु)



1860s



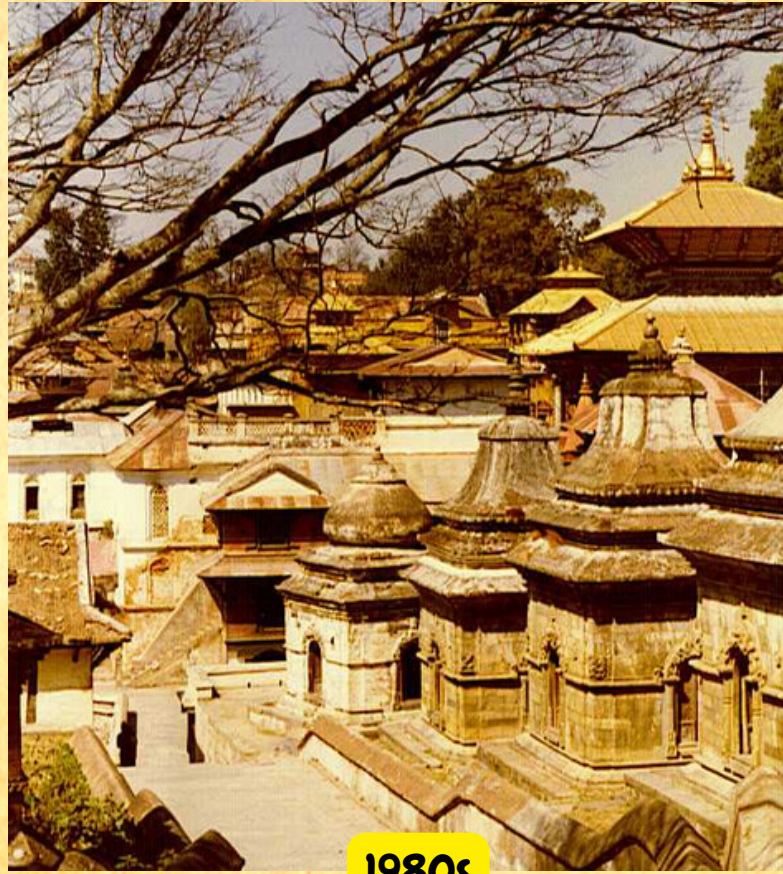
1920s



1960s



1970s



1980s



2000s

Glossary

- ☀️ Acharya (आचार्य)
 - A title or honorific used for a learned teacher or spiritual guide.
- ☀️ Aagam (आगम)
 - A term referring to the Tantra.
- ☀️ Bankaali (बनकाली)
 - A deity or goddess often associated with power and energy.
- ☀️ Belpatra (बेलपत्र)
 - Leaves of the Bael tree used in religious rituals and offerings.
- ☀️ Bhasma (भस्म)
 - Sacred ash obtained from the burning of substances used in Hindu rituals.
- ☀️ Bhatta (भट्ट)
 - A surname often associated with the Brahmin community in India.
- ☀️ Brikshya (बृक्ष्य)
 - A Sanskrit term meaning "tree."
- ☀️ Chita (चिता)
 - A funeral pyre or cremation ground.
- ☀️ Dabali (डबली)
 - A Newari term for a stage. It is used especially for religious performances.
- ☀️ Gajur (गजुर)
 - The topmost part of the temples (Pinnacle)
- ☀️ Ghat (घाट)
 - Steps or a platform leading down to a body of water, often used for ritual bathing or cremation of dead bodies.
- ☀️ Gungu (गुन्गु)
 - A Newari Term for indicating the number nine.
- ☀️ Guthiyars (गुठियार)
 - Priests or caretakers of a temple or religious institution.
- ☀️ Homa (होम)
 - A fire ritual or ceremonial offering performed in Hinduism.
- ☀️ Hawan (हवन)
 - A ritual of making offerings to a sacred fire, often accompanied by recitations of Vedic mantras and prayers.
- ☀️ Jalhari (जल्हारी)
 - The swaroop of Parvati and her power.
- ☀️ Jyotirlingas(ज्योतिर्लिङ्ग)
 - Sacred shrines or temples dedicated to Lord Shiva.
- ☀️ Kundalini (कुण्डलिनी)
 - A dormant spiritual energy believed to be located at the base of the spine.

Glossary

- ☀️ **Kshetra Paals (क्षेत्र पाल)**
 - Caretakers or guardians of a particular religious or sacred site.
- ☀️ **Kush (कुश)**
 - A type of grass often used in religious ceremonies and rituals.
- ☀️ **Mahaprasad (महाप्रसाद)**
 - Sacred food or offerings are offered to deities in Hindu temples.
- ☀️ **Mukti Mandap (मुक्ति मण्डप)**
 - A place or structure associated with liberation or spiritual emancipation.
- ☀️ **Natraj (नटराज)**
 - A depiction or form of Lord Shiva as the cosmic dancer.
- ☀️ **Paanchayan Vidhi (पान्चायन विधि)**
 - A set of rituals or procedures followed in offering prayers or worship.
- ☀️ **Sadhana (साधना)**
 - Spiritual practice undertaken for self-realization or attainment of a goal.
- ☀️ **Shakti Peethas (शक्ति पीठ)**
 - Sacred places associated with the divine feminine energy or Goddess Shakti.
- ☀️ **Sadhana (साधना)**
 - This term is not familiar and doesn't have a specific meaning in this context.
- ☀️ **Sankalpa (संकल्प)**
 - An intention or resolve made during a ritual or spiritual practice.
- ☀️ **Sanatana (सनातन)**
 - A term meaning eternal or timeless, often used in reference to Hindu philosophy.
- ☀️ **Tantric (तान्त्रिक)**
 - Relating to the esoteric practices and rituals of Tantra, a spiritual tradition.
- ☀️ **Tripurasundari (त्रिपुरासुन्दरी)**
 - A form of the divine feminine or Goddess Tripura Sundari.
- ☀️ **Vahana (वाहन)**
 - Vāhanam or animal vehicle, literally "that which carries, that which pulls") denotes the being, typically an animal or mythical, a particular Hindu God is said to be used as a vehicle.
- ☀️ **Yogis (योगी)**
 - Practitioners of yoga, individuals who follow a yogic lifestyle or discipline.

Please note that some of the terms may have multiple meanings or interpretations depending on the context and cultural traditions.

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