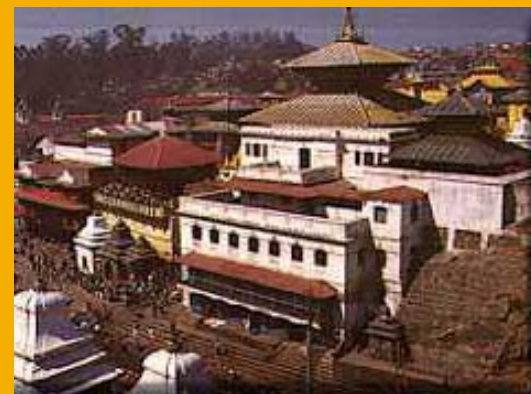
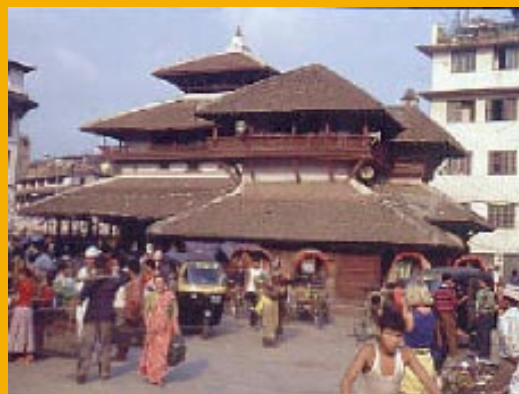
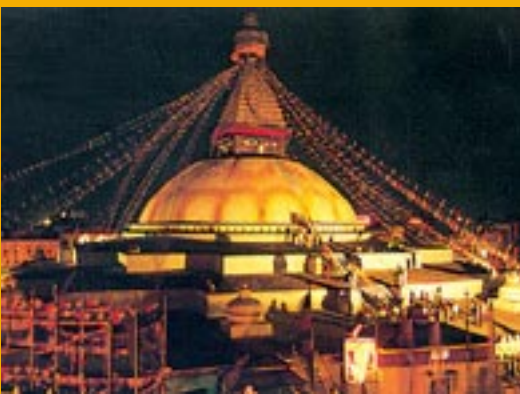




Attractions *in* **Kathmandu**

AND ITS SUCCESSFUL MANAGEMENT

A GUIDE BOOK



Ananda Kumar Maharjan
Ammar Raj Guni

Attractions
in **Kathmandu**
AND ITS SUCCESSFUL MANAGEMENT

A GUIDE BOOK

Ananda Kumar Maharjan
Ammar Raj Guni

Preface

Travel and Tourism has been regarded as the world's biggest business and most fruitful industry in the world and many nations have made heavy investments in this sector. Nepal is an important tourist destination in the world tourism map with its vast potentials of natural attractions, socio-cultural values and archaeological heritages. Tourism has wider implications encompassing not only economic benefits but also social and cultural benefits as well. It also encompasses environmental, educational and political significance.

Nepal offers tourists a breath-taking experience of nature and ever-present mountain scenery, including Everest, the world's highest peak. Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal has an incredibly rich cultural heritage, both built and living. This includes intriguing historic living cities, overflowing with monuments some of which are of great antiquity. It has many styles of traditional settlement, all set against some of the world's most dramatic mountain scenery. Festivals, often dating from pre-history, still abound and are filled with vitality and colour. The city is blessed by a pleasant year-round climate, affording stunning mountain views for much of the year. In addition to this the city is peopled by an unfailingly friendly population who are generally very happy to share their innate hospitality as well as their many customs and traditions with visitors. Kathmandu has an immense amount to offer both the general and special interest visitor and it developed as one of the world's most fashionable long haul exotic destinations.

This guidebook entitled "*Attractions in Kathmandu and its Successful Management*" focuses on the tourism attractions, accommodations, accessibility and amenities in Kathmandu city. It offers comprehensive information on the various touristic places in and around Kathmandu. This guidebook could be helpful to tourists or individuals who wants to know more about the people and places of Kathmandu and it's culture, customs and traditions. It also suggests various types of accomodiation, infrastructures and facilities available in Kathmandu. Effort has been made to explain and evaluate the necessary environment needed for the development of tourism in Kathmandu city. It also suggest measures and strategies to boost the tourism in Kathmandu. Painstaking efforts is undertaken to make the report more complete and informative.

Ananda Kumar Maharjan

Ammar Raj Guni

Kathmandu, 2005

Acknowledgement

This report could never have been completed without the invaluable co-operation and assistance of many individuals and organizations. I would like to record my heartily gratitude to all the people who helped me by providing their invaluable views and opinions, which formed an integral part of the study.

First and foremost, I wish to express my sincere and deep sense of gratitude to Professor Mr. Binay Shakya, for his constant guidance and supervision during the study. He has provided his precious time in the completion of the work. His wise counsel and guidance provided me the inspiration to go ahead with the work. I am greatly indebted to several travel and tourism organizations and associations whose valuable reports and publications have immensely helped in preparing this report.

I would like to extend my special gratitude to my friends Mr. Subhash Maharjan, Gyanu Raj Manandhar, Rajendral Dangol and Lokesh Manandhar for their caring, valuable advice and assistance through several phases. Similarly, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to "Ananda Typing Institute and Computer Services" for their innovative and tireless work of typing, designing and arranging the complete research work.

Finally, I owe my thanks to my family - Asha Kaji Maharjan, Sumitra Maharjan, Ambika Maharjan, Ashlesha Maharjan - for their constant support and encouragement.

Ananda Kumar Maharjan
Ammar Raj Guni

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	<i>ii</i>
<i>Acknowledgement</i>	<i>iii</i>
Chapter 1: Introduction to Kathmandu City	1
1.1 Historical Background of Kathmandu	1
1.2 Kathmandu: An Introduction	2
1.3 Kathmandu district at a glance	2
Chapter 2: Tourism Products and Infrastructure	4
2.1 Attractions in Kathmandu	4
2.2 Amenities in Kathmandu	31
2.3 Accessibility	34
2.4 Accommodation in Kathmandu	35
Chapter 3: Contributions and Impacts of Tourism	37
3.1 Contribution of Tourism	37
3.2 Impacts of Tourism	40
Chapter 4: Problems and Suggestions	44
4.1 Problems and Challenges	44
4.2 Strategies for Tourism Development in Kathmandu	45
4.3 Future of Kathmandu City	49
Chapter 5: Recommendations and Conclusions	50
5.1 Recommendations	50
5.2 Conclusions	53
<i>References</i>	<i>54</i>

List of Tables

Table 1: Hotel Accommodation in Kathmandu and their rates	36
Table 2: Tourist Arrival 1997 Vs 2001	38
Table 3: Foreign Currency Generation (US \$ in million)	38
Table 4: Tourist Arrivals by Months 2002 Vs 2003	39

List of Figures

Figure 1: Tourist Arrival 1997 Vs 2001	38
Figure 2: Foreign Currency Generation (US \$ in million)	38
Figure 3: Tourist Arrivals by Months 2002 Vs 2003	39
Figure 4: Direct Employment in Tourism Sector 1986-87	41
Figure 5: Indirect Employment in Tourism Sector 1986-87	41

List of Maps

Map 1: Map of Kathmandu	3
Map 2: Map of Kathmandu Durbar Square	5
Map 3: Map of Kathmandu Valley	36

1

CHAPTER

Introduction to Kathmandu City

Kathmandu is the capital of the kingdom of Nepal, situated in a valley which is an open air museum of famous sites, ancient temples and shrines, golden pagodas and are inspiring deities, is a city of inexhaustible historic artistic and cultural interest. Several beautiful and interesting villages and towns surrounding the valley offer ideal destinations for mini treks. The dazzling Himalayan peaks are visible from several points on the mountains around the valley. Kathmandu is famous and unique in the world in the field of arts, crafts and architecture. The splendid temples, monasteries and historical monuments of Kathmandu are highly appreciated by visitors to Kathmandu. Kathmandu is regarded as “a Living Cultural Museum” of Nepal.

I.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF KATHMANDU

The city of Kathmandu was built by king Gun Kamdev in 723 A.D. It is said that Kathmandu was a lake in the past and was made habitable by Manjushree, who cut open the hill to south (Chovar) as to allow the water of lake to flow out.

It is said that Kathmandu city was named after “Kastha-Mandap” meaning the temple made of wood in Sanskrit, an imposing pagoda near Hanuman Dhoka Palace. It was built in 1596 out of a single tree by King Laxmi Narashingha Malla.

Kathmandu Metropolitan City was established as a city sanitation Unit (Saphai Adda) on B.S. 1976. Later on it was changed to Municipality Office during the premiership of Bhim Shamsher J.B. Rana on B.S. 1988. After the destructive tremor of 1990 BS (1993AD) modern urbanization was started and roads were planned. For the first time municipality office distributed the land plots in concession rates to the people. During the Premiership of Padma Shamsher J.B. Rana a city Municipality board was formed but it could not function and all representative resigned. After the democracy movement of B.S. 2007 (1950 AD) Municipality Act was passed and

Kathmandu City was divided into 18 sectors and 18 members were elected to form the municipality Board on B.S. 2110.

1.2 KATHMANDU CITY: AN INTRODUCTION

Kathmandu is the capital and the largest city in Nepal. The Kathmandu Valley is around 25km from west to east and 20km from north to south. Kathmandu is at an elevation of 1300m and the surrounding area and hills range from 1500m to 2800m. There are three roads that come into the valley, two to the south going towards India and one in the north going towards Tibet.

Throughout Kathmandu there are many temples, shrines, interesting buildings, traditional villages and some great scenery. It can easily spend a week visiting the places in the valley. Besides visiting the main city in the Kathmandu Valley there are other interesting places to visit such as temple, stupas, villages and mountain viewpoints. Things can get much quieter after leaving Kathmandu. One of the main places to visit is the Buddhist site of Swayambhunath, which has a great setting on top of a hill. It is easy walking distance from Kathmandu. The most important Hindu temple is Pashupatinath, on the east side of Kathmandu near the airport. Also interesting is the Tibetan Buddhist site of Bodhnath. Some of the good mountain viewpoints on the edge of the valley are Nagarkot, Dhulikhel and Kakani. Some interesting temples you may want to visit are ChanguNarayan, near Bhaktapur, which has some great ancient sculptures, Budhanilkantha, north of Kathmandu, which has an ancient 1400-year-old deity of Lord Vishnu, and Dakshinkali, in the southwestern part of the valley, which is a Kali temple.

2.3 KATHMANDU DISTRICT AT A GLANCE

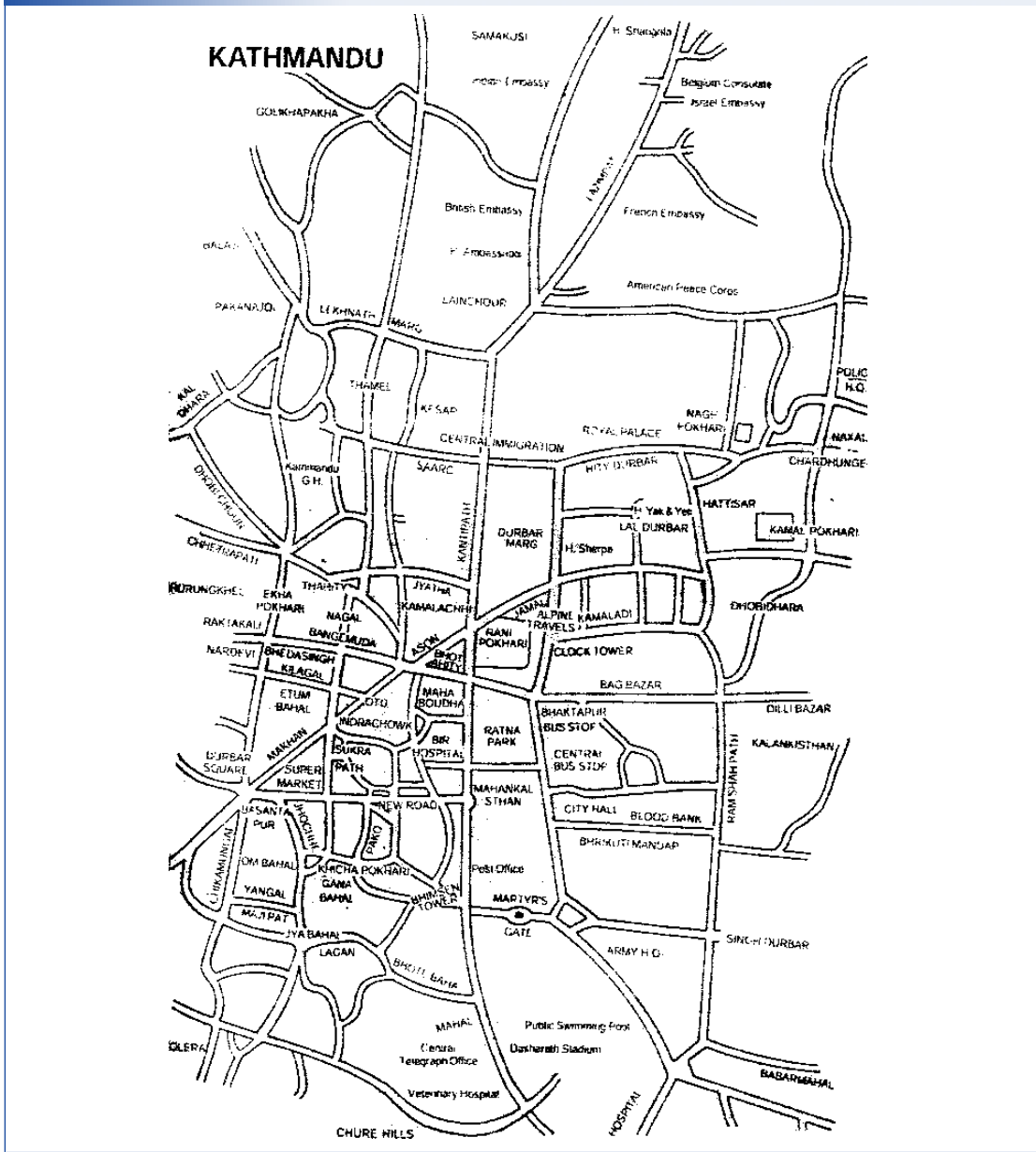
<i>Country:</i> Nepal	<i>Annual Growth rate:</i> 6%
<i>Capital:</i> Kathmandu	<i>Average of the annual humidity:</i> 75%
<i>Longitude:</i> 85° 20' East	<i>Rainfall average :</i> 1306.75 mm
<i>Latitude :</i> 27° 42' North	<i>Climate :</i> Sub-tropical cool temperate
<i>Elevation:</i> 1350 m	<i>City road network:</i> 219.5 km
<i>City area:</i> 5067 ha (50.67sqkm)	<i>National Highway:</i> 17km
<i>Population:</i> 701,962 (Census 2001)	<i>Feeder Road:</i> 0.4km
<i>Household:</i> 1,716, 912	<i>District Road:</i> 9.7km
<i>Average Household size:</i> 5.2	<i>Urban Road:</i> 273km
<i>Built up area:</i> 3844.56 ha	<i>Major industry:</i> Tourism, Handicrafts,
<i>Average pop-density:</i> 175.7per/ha	<i>Garments & Cottage Industries</i>
<i>Per capita income:</i> 360 US\$	<i>Principal Language:</i> Nepali, Newari
<i>Annual Temperature:</i>	<i>& English</i>
<i>Summer:</i> 19°C - 27°C	<i>Religion:</i> Hindu & Buddhist
<i>Winter:</i> 2°C - 20°C	<i>Main Rivers:</i> Bagmati, Bishnumati &

Dhobikhola
 No of ISP's: 12
 Internet subscribers: < 10,000
 UNESCO World Heritage Sites: 4
 Education Colleges: 23
 Higher Secondary School: 98
 Lower Secondary School: 50
 Primary: 236

Pre-primary: 110
 Tribhuvan University is just about 5 km
 South West of the main City.
 Health Services Hospitals: 10
 Nursing home : 16
 Urban Health Clinics : 18
 197 patients per hospital bed

(Source: CBS 1991 census)

MAP 1: Map of Kathmandu



Tourism Products and Infrastructures

The locale, with its attractions and amenities, is the most important as these are very basic to tourism. It is the products which motivates tourists to visit and see certain things in certain destination. Accommodation plays a central role and is very basic to tourist destinations. And Accessibility is a very crucial factor as it is a means by which a tourist can reach the area where attractions are located. Every country of the world possesses varying attractions. Natural attractions, cultural values and archaeological beauties are the main attractions in Kathmandu. With possession of such numerous attractions, the potentiality of tourism is very high in Kathmandu city.

3.1 ATTRACTIONS IN KATHMANDU

One of the most important and crucial part of tourism is the tourism product. The attractions are those elements in the tourist product which determine the choice of tourist to visit one destination rather than another. (Singh, 1994: 99) There are different types of products for the tourists like site attractions, built attractions, event attractions etc. Peter has drawn up an inventory of the various attractions which are of significance in tourism, According to Peter, The five categories of tourism attractions are Cultural, Traditions, Scenic, Entertainment and Others attractions.

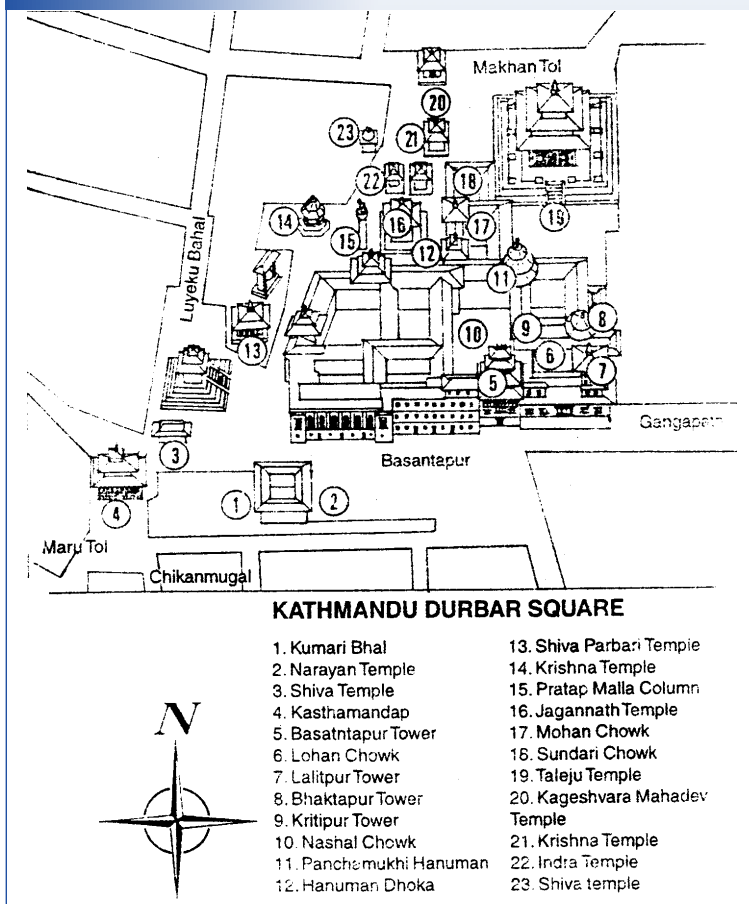
Kathmandu, a blend of ancient history, vibrant cultures and scenic grandeur, is rich in cultural, traditions, historical, art, archaeological, and scenic attractions. Kathmandu has a pleasing weather and different types of festivals are observed throughout the year. The Kathmandu and many other parts of the country are endowed with arts, sculptures and architectures. Simplicity of design, regularity of motifs and refinement of taste are the salient features of Nepalese temples.

3.1.1 Religious Sites in Kathmandu

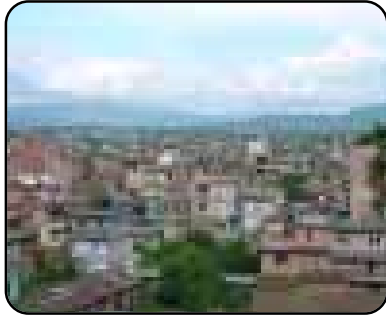
(I) Kathmandu Durbar Square (Attraction type: Town center/square/plaza/Religious site)

The best place to begin your sightseeing of Kathmandu valley is the Kathmandu Durbar. An entrance fee of Rs. 200 for foreign nationals and Rs. 25 for the SAARC countries is to be paid to get into Durbar Square. A very old Hindu text has described Kathmandu as the land of gods surrounded by beautiful mountains around. Some two hundred years ago a western Visitor wrote that there were as many temples as there were houses and many idols as there were people. In fact Kathmandu boasts one of the largest congregations of magnificent historical monuments and shrines ever built. Duly recognized as a world Heritage Site by UNESCO- this particular area best known as Kathmandu Durbar Square lies in the heart of this city. The Newars are regarded as the original inhabitants of this majestic valley, but their origins are shrouded in mystery. They speak Newari language and their physical features range from distinctively Mongoloid. Kathmandu Valley has long been a cultural and racial melting pot with people coming from both east and west. This fusion has resulted in the unique Newari culture that is responsible for the valley's superb art and architecture. Locally also called as Hanuman Dhoka Palace Square-an ancient seat of the Nepalese Royalty. Some of the important monuments to be seen here are:

MAP 2: Map of Kathmandu Durbar Square

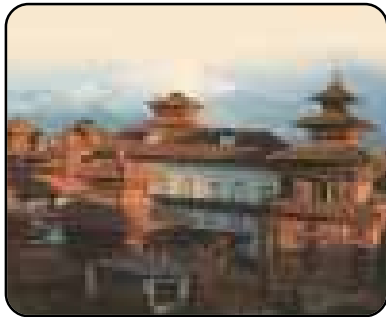


Hanuman Dhoka (Attraction type: Town center/square/plaza/ Architectural building) – Palace Complex consists of a huge Royal Square imposing a tremendous variety of temples dedicated to different Hindu gods and goddess. Most of the buildings we see here date from 15th to 18th century. The entire Palace Complex here is named after a monkey god called Hanuman. One can see a huge stone statue of Hanuman painted all red right next to the main entrance (the golden gate) of the palace. Hanuman here is regarded as a powerful protector of the entire Durbar Square. Kneeling in his usual posture on a pedestal, *Hanuman* is a hero from the Hindu epic *Ramayana*, who endows military success to his devotees - the reason why he has been placed there. The gate is



Kathmandu Valley

guarded by two stone lions that are mounted by the god Shiva and his consort, Parvati. Immediately inside is the biggest of the Hanuman Dhoka Palace's chowks (courtyards), **Nasal Chowk**. This is where the king's coronation takes place and where various other festivities are held. Here we also find the entrance to the **Tribhuvan Museum** largely dedicated to the memory of the late king Tribhuvan. The **Panch Mukhi Hanuman Temple**, with its five circular roofs, whose entrance is limited only to priests, lies at the north-eastern corner of the Nasal chowk.



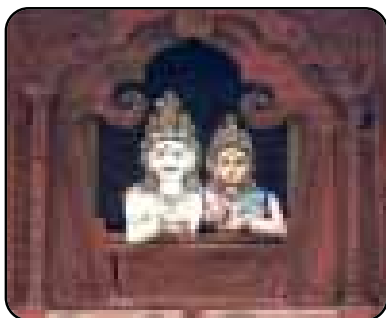
Kathmandu Durbar Square

Basantapur Tower (Attraction type: Lookout) – There are four towers in the palace. Of these, Basantapur Tower, built by King Prithvi Narayan Shah around the Lohan Chowk, is the tallest. **Mook Chowk** is the courtyard dedicated to the goddess, Taleju Bhawani, and is used only for religious functions of the palace. **Taleju temple**, tallest of all structures built by king Mahendra Malla in 1549 A.D.



Kumari Ghar

Kumari Ghar (Attraction type: Religious site) – 17th century Kumari temple, an example of the highly developed Nepalese temple craft. It the house of the *Royal Kumari* acknowledged to be a Living Goddess. The building has profusely carved wooden balconies and window screens. Two painted stone lions stand guard at the entrance. Visitors may enter the courtyard to see Kumari, but are forbidden to take photographs.



Shiva Parvati Temple House

Shiva Parvati Temple House (Attraction type: Religious site) – lies on the left as one walks into the Durbar Square from Kumari Bahal. The celestial couple carved in wood look down into the street from the central window on the upper floor. They are overlooking the place, have a look where Shiva is holding his left hand! Again this Temple has fantastic carved windows and two lions guarding the entrance.

Maju Deval (Attraction type: Religious site) – This Temple is dedicated to Shiva and inside you will find a famous Lingam. The temple is set atop nine levels of plinth. The steps of this temple is a favourite place to sit and watch the daily life.. Both locals and tourists can be found reposing against the many levels of platforms watching the bustle of the crowd below or even enjoying a siesta.

Gadhi Baithak – stands out very conspicuously, or rather, incongruously in the same square with its neoclassical European



Trailokya Mohan Narayan Temple

architecture. Built in the early years of the 20th century during the Rana period, its balcony overlooking the square is from where the king witness the pageantry of the Indra Jatra festival.

Trailokya Mohan Narayan Temple (Attraction type: Religious site)

– The Trailokya Mohan Temple was built in 1680 by Prithvibendra Malla. It is on the immediate left as one walks out of the Kumari Bahal. It is built on a panoply of five plinths that narrow down at each upper level and above the shrine is a three-tiered roof. On the back you see a beautiful *Garuda*.



The Gaurda

Bhagwati Temple (Attraction type: Religious site) – is the three-

storied building next to the Gaddi Baithak. Built by King Jagat Jaya Malla in 1670 and originally dedicated to Lord Narayan.

The Big Bell (Attraction type: Lookout) – was erected by the son of

Prithvi Narayan Shah, Rana Bahadur in 1797. The ringing of bell is said to drive away evil spirits, and is rung on occasion when ceremonies are held at Degu Taleju Temple.

Vishnu Temple (Attraction type: Religious site) – lies next to the Big

Bell and after it comes the **Saraswati Temple**. Both were severely damaged in the Great Earthquake of 1934. **Krishna Mandir** is the next monument and was built in 1648 by King Pratap Malla in imitation of its more famous namesake in Patan. It has an octagonal-shaped construction with a three-tiered roof.



Durbar Square

Pratap Dhvaja – King Pratap Malla’s statue called Prataf Dhvaja

lies mounted on the high pillar on the outer courtyard. He sits with hands folded and surrounded by is two wives and five children facing the entrance of Hanuman Dhoka.

Seto Bhairab’s huge glided face lies hidden behind a latticed

wooden screen. The screen is only opened for ten days once every year during the festival of Indra Jatra when devotees flock around the shower this image with rice and confetti of flower petals.



The Rat, Lord Ganesh’s bahan

Jagannath temple (Attraction type: Religious site) – in the central

part of the Durbar Square, exhibits a variety of erotic carvings on the struts supporting its canopies. Built in the 16th century, known for fascinating erotic figures carving the wooden struts eaves. Next to it lies **Gopinath Mandir**, a temple honoring Lord Krishna.



Living Goddess Kumari



People waiting during Indra Jatra festival to see Kumari.



Kasthamandap



Kal Bhairav (Attraction type: Religious site) – is one of the largest stone idol in Kathmandu representing the terrifying aspects of Shiva. Kal Bhairav is a massive relief in stone of a fierce-looking deity, painted in black and garlanded with skulls around neck, and bright red and yellow ornaments. **Indrapur Temple** lies immediately east of the Kal Bhairav and adjoining it is the **Vishnu Temple**. North of it is the **Kakeshwar Temple** built in 1681. Stone inscriptions in 15 languages, including English and French, can be seen outside the wall of the Hanuman Dhoka opposite the Vishnu Temple.

Kotilingeshwar Mahadev Temple (Attraction type: Religious site) – is a Shiva Temple built in the 1500s in the era of King Mahendra Malla. Set atop three levels of plinth, it is a square structure with a domed roof. **Mahavishnu Temple** stands on a set of four levels of plinth and has a two-tiered roof. **Mahendrashwar Temple** is another temple dedicated to Shiva. It has two levels of plinth and it topped by a golden umbrella.

The Ganesh shrine Ashok Binayak (Attraction type: Religious site) – One of my favourites places on Durbar Square is the little Ganesh temple on the corner of the Kasthamandap. From the early morning on, devotees are coming to give some offerings to Ganesh, asking luck for a travel or a business. After giving a little offering to the god, they receive a little spot of red colour on their head, the Hindu Thikka. This magic place is absolutely worth to be visited very early in the morning.

Kasthamandap (Attraction type: Religious site) – The name means house of wood. The Kathmandu City derives its name from Kasthamandap. This Temple is supposed to be one of the oldest remaining houses of Kathmandu. This unique wooden temple is also known as Maru Satal. It was built in 1596 A.D. by King Laxmi Narsingh Malla. They say the timber used for its relevant construction was sawed out of a single tree.

Taleju Temple (Attraction type: Religious site) – The grandest among all the temple in Kathmandu Durbar Square is Taleju Temple. Standing on a level of twelve plinth at a height exceeding 35 meters, this temple dominates the landscapes around Durbar Square. Built in 1564 by King Mahendra Malla. It is only opened to the public during the festival of Dashain.

Nautale Durbar – Besides this other fascinating part of this palace complex is the towering Nautale Durbar overlooking the beautiful cityscape and the vast Basantapur square where Prithivi Narayan Shah built mansion to commemorate his victory in 1768 A.D. This building complex is known for the most intricately carved wooden doorways roof struts and massive lattice windows full of mythical figures.

(2) Swoyambhu Nath Stupa (*Attraction type: Religious site*)

Swayambhunath is a hilltop temple complex situated on the northwestern boundary of Kathmandu, with panoramic views of the valley and city. Its main feature is a Buddhist stupa, the Maha Chaitya, reputed to be more than 2,000 years old. Located in a lovely little hill rock Swoyambhu Nath Stupa is one of the most fascinating architectural jewels of the world. This great Stoup is said to have been built around 250 B.C. It is indeed listed a World Heritage for Site to prove that it serves as the nerve center of faithful worship for all the devout philosophy of Bajrayan in particular and honors Lord Adi Buddha. Generally a holy memorial site Stoup represents a typical Buddhist architecture. Its main feature the white dome is identified with a spotless pure jewel of Nirvana and a thirteen tiered golden spire in conical shape surmounted on the dome. Underneath this towering structure are a pair of all seeing eyes of Buddha painted on all four sides of the Stupa. The Stupa of Swoyambhunath stands on a typically stylized lotus mandala base-a long time ago believed to have originated from a legendary lake of Kathmandu Valley. As the ancient legend goes Kathmandu Valley was a lake a long time ago. Right in the



Swayambhu eyes



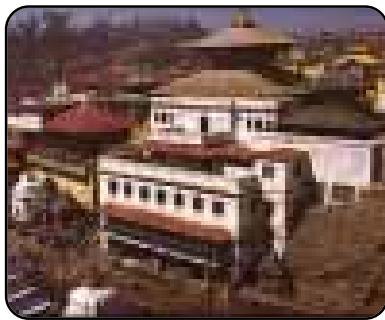
Swyambhunath Stupa

centre of this lake was a full blown lotus with the divine light a top. When Maha Manjushri a saint from China heard about this he came rushing all the way from China to the Valley. He cut through the southern wall hill of the valley with his divine sword. The cleft made by the sword immediately drained the entire lake water making the valley floor open for a close up view of the divine lotus light. This holy site in fact is the massive stupa complex ever built in Nepal. Hundreds of votive shrines and other historical monuments built in and around this stupa speak a lot about the significance and antiquity of this famed stupa. It lies about 3k.m. west of down town Kathmandu. There are two different ways to reach for this site. One is from the west side which is relatively a short cut and another is from the east side where it leads to the main entrance with 360 steps leading all the way to the top, where the most venerated Swayambhu Stupa stands-commanding a magnificent view of Kathmandu Valley and the breathtaking panorama of the north eastern Himalayan range. Other important things to be seen here include a magnificent two tiered golden temple dedicated to Harati. She is the grand mother deity of children and small pox who was said to be the Ogress until Lord Buddha converted her to be the great caretaker of the children. Not to far from this temple is Dewa Dharma monastery-noted for a bronze icon of Buddha and traditional

Tibetan paintings . The huge gold plated vajra ' tha priestly symbol of Vajrayana Buddhism set on the Dharmadhatu mandala at the side of the stupa is worth a close look. Important days to visit this holy site: Buddha Purnima, Gunla, Kojagrath Purni and Samyak day. The entry fee for foreign nationals is Rs. 50 per person.

(3) Pasupatinath Temple (*Attraction type: Religious site*)

Pasupatinath is considered one of the holiest shrines of all the Hindu temples. It is pagoda style Hindu temple with gilt roofing and richly carved silver doors dedicated to Lord Shiva. The temple has remained the presiding deity of ruling Nepalese Royalty. Located on the banks of the Bagmati river, this two tiered magnificent golden temple with four triple silver doorways is unique example of the Nepalese temple architecture. It is one of the largest Hindu temple complex in South Asia with hundreds of Shiva lingams, shrines icons of various Hindu god and goddess insides. This temple site occupies an area of 281 hectares in total. The main entrance of this temple is in the western side facing a small street of Deopatan market. As non Hindus are not allowed to enter this temple courtyard. They are advised to go on the other side of the river in the East to have a glimpse of the temple complex. In the middle of the spring (Feb.- March) every year there occurs a festival called Shivaratri. The world Shivaratri means the holy night of Lord Shiva. On this day many devotees visit the Pashupati Nath temple and make the



Pasupatinath Temple

ceremonial fire. Most of the devotees spend the night offering prayers to Shiva. This festival attracts tens of thousand of pilgrims from India besides the locals. Historically pre-Christian era this temple seems to have its origin away back to the early Kirat period. Stone sculptures found in the vicinity support the antiquity of this place. This holy site is 6 km. east of downtown Kathmandu. Regular bus and taxi services are easily available from city points. Temple is the nerve center of pilgrimage on the festival of Shivaratri and Teej. The entry fee for foreign nationals is Rs. 50 per person.

(4) Guheshwori Temple (*Attraction type: Religious site*)

Guheshwori Temple lies 500 meters east of Pashupatinath across the Bagmati River. This temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva's wife., Parvati. On a forested knoll, further behind Pashupati Temple to the eastern direction and also by the side of the bending or winding Bagmati River appears the gracious temple of Guheshwori sometimes known as Nairatma Yogini or Aksah Yogini. It is



Boudhanath Stupa

another famous spot of Hindu pilgrimage. In this case, also, only Hindus are authorized to enter the premises.

(5) Boudhanath Stupa (*Attraction type: Religious site*)

Boudhanath is a colossal stupa north east of Pashupatinath and lies a further 2 km by road. One of the oldest and the biggest Buddhist monuments ever built in Nepal, Boudhanath is an imposing structure standing some 36 meters. This is declared to stand as the largest Buddhist shrine of South Asia. The Stupa stands on the massive



Boudhanath

three level mandala style Platforms surrounded by colourful private family houses. The basic feature of this great stupa is very much like that of Swoyambhunath stupa except its finial displaying. It is much bigger than Swoyambhu stupa and lies on the valley floor whereas the former one stands on the hill top. This stupa is said to have been built in 5th century A. D. The site is considered very much like Mecca for the Tibetan Buddhists and every year tens of thousands of pilgrims from all over the Himalayan region visit the stupa. Some of the gompas surrounding Boudha are Sakyapa Gompa, Chinya-Lama Gompa, Nyingmapa Gompa, Kargyupa Gompa, Gelugpa Gompa etc. According to a very popular legend long time ago the kingdom of Kathmandu was under terrifying draught. King Dharma Deva was very worried. An astrologer advised him that only the sacrifice of an ideal man with 32 virtues in front of the dry royal water spout could make the rain fall in the country. And in the following night he commanded his son to go to the dry water spout inside the royal palace compound at mid night and behead the person shrouded in white robe without looking at him. The Prince obeyed his father but to his great horror only to find it was none other than his own father. In order to atone the big sin and in removal the prince said to have built this great stupa. As an entry point of ancient Nepal-Tibet trade rout, the site is popularly frequented by Tibetan visitors. During Lhosar festival the pilgrims worship the Buddhist deities, light the increase and butter lamp day and night. Every twelve year a special ceremony is observed with great gusto and fervor . During that time they dance, play musical instruments, chant and hymns. The entry fee for foreign nationals is Rs. 50 per person.



Changu Narayan

(6) Changu Narayan (*Attraction type: Religious site*)

Changu Narayan, with an ancient Hindu temple complex inside an enclosed courtyard, located approximately 13 kms east-north-east from Kathmandu, the temple is also on a hilltop, at an altitude of 1550 metres above sea level. Narayan, or Vishnu, is the preserver of creation to Hindus. Situated on the beautiful hil, the square two storeyed temple stands in the centre of a brickpaved courtyard, with the main structure raised on a three tier diminishing plinth, with doors on all four sides. The doors have pairs of carvings of animals such as lions, horses, griffins, and elephants with the main western door richly carved in brass, with a brass tympanum above the door. The roof is supported by 24 struts or brackets, which serve as decoration and to support the temple roof. His temple is often described as the most ancient temple in Kathmandu, based on a fifth century inscription on a stone pillar discovered inside the temple grounds. The Changu Narayan complex and associated statues, carvings and artifacts cover sixteen hundred years of Newari art and in effect chart the cultural development of the indigenous Newari people. The courtyard has many other temples such as that of Kileshwar Shiva, , Chinnamasta Devi, and other figures like that of Garuda. The temple and surrounding buildings exhibit some of the finest stone, wood, and metal craft in the Valley. It is therefore sacred to adherents of both religions and attracts

thousands of pilgrims from around the world each year as one of the three most venerated power places in the Kathmandu Valley. The entry fee for foreign nationals is Rs. 60 per person.

(7) Dachhinkali (*Attraction type: Religious site*)

Kali is a bloodthirsty Hindu Goddess. This particular temple lies in the southernmost suburbs of the Valley, beyond Furping downward in a solitary ravine. So she is termed 'Dachhinkali' meaning South Kali. The important days for religious pilgrimage include Tuesdays and Saturdays. A ritual worship attached by animal sacrifice would not be an uncommon scene here the practice of which is totally against Buddhism in the birth land of Lord Buddha. The poor victims include the fowls, birds and sheep in general.

(8) Buddhanilkantha (*Attraction type: Religious site*)

Situated in the northern suburbs of the Valley just at the foot of Mt. Shibapur, this is an enchanting Hindu temple dedicated to Lord Bishnu Narayan. So the locality is also known as Narayanthan. He lies in a bed of serpents amidst the pious pool and seems to float on water. The surrounding pond actually represents the sea. The reclining statue was built in the 5th century A.D. The season of religious celebration here takes place right after the festival of Tihar. Although it is a renowned spot of worship, the reigning king of Nepal (may it be contemporary or any Hindu monarch) may not visit this place for reasons particularly unknown. Thus to please the king a replica of it has been built elsewhere if he wishes to visit it much.

(9) Bhadrakali Temple (*Attraction type: Religious site*)

As the eastern edge of the Tundikhel, near Shahid Gate stands the temple of Goddess Bhadrakali. This temple is also known as Lumarhi Temple and is one of the main "Shakta" temples of Kathmandu city.

(10) Karunamaya Temple (*Attraction type: Religious site*)

It is a Buddhist pagoda of considerable artistic beauty located in a holy courtyard called Jan Bahal, which is full of stupas and statues nearby Indra-Chowk. It consists of a two tiered bronze roof built by King Yaksha Malla in 1502 A.D. This authentic temple is surrounded by residential houses and busy shops. The chariot festival of White Karunamaya-the "God of Mercy" is annually celebrated in Kathmandu Valley.

(11) Akash Bhairab Temple (*Attraction type: Religious site*)

Also referred to as the Blue Bhairab sometimes, it is a three-storeyed temple in the principal market called Indra Chowk. The divine image of the Akash Bhairab is displayed outside for a week -long period during the great festival of Indra Jatra. The celebration of Indra Jatra honors Indra- the King of Heaven and the God of Rain.

(12) Jaishi Dewal (*Attraction type: Religious site*)

Five minutes from Kasthmandap the Shiva Temple of Jaishi Dewal is famous for its erotic carvings. It is still one of the main routes of the chariot festival of Indra Jatra, Gai Jatra and other festivals.

(13) Kimdol Monastery (*Attraction type: Religious site*)

Situated within Ward No. 15 of Kathmandu City adjacent to Swayamvu Hill is another famous Buddhist monastery called Kimdol. It is a small town itself full of Buddhist citizens. Kimdol resides on a hillock atop which sits a Buddhist embracing the two major aspects of Buddhism including Mahayan (Lamaism) and Hinyan (Therbad). Apart from that we find numerous stupas, chaityas and chhortens scattered around. Prayer-flags with printed Tibetan characters and holy diagrams flutter many terraces and rooftops. Kimdol bahal is believed to be the location whence the Hinyan (Therbad) form of Buddhism highly developed. Today only nunnery of the saffron robe is practiced here; monk hood has eventually shifted elsewhere. The bahal restricts the consumption of liquors of any kind (strong or mild), tobacco, meat, fish, egg and even garlic for all visiting the monastery. The spectacular view of old Kathmandu, i.e. Kantipur, can be clearly fetched from Kimdol height.

(14) Kopan Monastery (*Attraction type: Religious site*)

Hundreds of monks and nuns live at this monastery, which offers meditation courses year round.

(15) Other temples

Some of the other religious temple situated around Kathmandu are:

Sweta Macchendra Temple – Temple attracts both Hindus and Buddhists

Lunchun Lunbun Ajima – Tantric Temple

Krishna Temple – Temple jammed between buildings in Ason Tole

Annapurna Temple – Dedicated to the goddess of abundance

Ugratara Temple – A prayer at the shrine said to work wonders for the eyes

Ikha Narayan Temple – Temple with four armed Vishnu figure

Kathesimbhu Stupa – South of Thahiti Tole

Jaisi Deval Temple – Shiva Temple, as shown by the bull on the first few steps

Ram Chandra Mandir – This temple is notable for the tiny erotic scenes on its roof

Adko Narayan Temple – One of the four most popular Vishnu Temple

Kalmochan Temple – On the side of Bagmati River, known as kalmochan Temple

Tripureshwar Mahadev – Along the footpath of Tripureshwar

Tindeval Temple – It is recognized by its three shikaras

Pachali Bhairab – The image of Pachali surrounded by tridents

Nava Durga Temple – A small two storey pagoda

Mahankala Temple – The Temple of Great Death

Neel Saraswati – Dedicated to the goddess Saraswati, located at Gairidhara

Ganesthan – Dedicated to the god Ganesh, located at Gairidhara

Maitidevi – Dedicated to the goddess Durga

Naxal Bhagawati – Dedicated to the goddess Bhagawati

3.1.2 Historical Buildings and Monuments :

(1) Narayanhiti Royal Palace (*Attraction type: Historic home*)

This is the current Royal Palace where the Himalayan Monarch of the Shah dynasty resides. It is built on a site of a much older one and owns a colossal compound. During the reign of late King Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, the father of the present king, the main gate was facing west. Today the main gate eventually faces south. Special permission has to be gotten to enter the palace premises on days of privilege. A famous historic water spout called Narayanhity, is situated at the southern corner of the Palace.

(2) Singha Durbar (*Attraction type: Historic palace*)

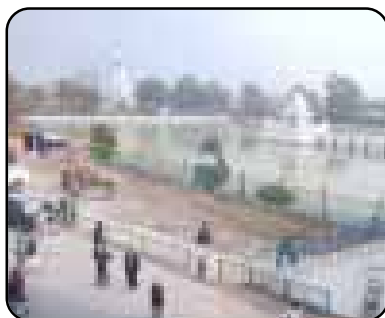
Literally meaning Lion Palace, it is a grand imposing palace built on the neo-classical style surrounded by a colossal compound. It was built by His Excellency Maharaja Chandra Shamsheer S.J.B. Rana- the 5th Rana Prime Minister. It once stood as the private residence of the Rana Premiers till 1950 but now remains the Secretariat Building of His Majesty's Government. The Parliament (including the Upper House and the Lower House), the Radio Station, the Television Station, etc. are all located in the very premises.

(3) Martyr's Memorial/Sahid Gate (*Attraction type: memorial arch*)

This is located on the way to Singha Durbar, between Bhimsen Stambha and Bhadrakali temple. The memorial arch contains the effigies of four political leaders who were mercilessly martyred in 1940. Two were hung and two were shot. They include Dharma Bhakta Mathema, Shukra Raj Joshy, Dashrath Chand and Ganga Lal Shrestha. The fatherly statue of late King Tribhuvan Bir Bikram Shah Deb appears high in the middle. Late King Tribhuvan is solely held responsible to lead the Historical revolution of 1950- 51 for laying the foundation of today's democratic system, virtually replacing the cruel family autocracy of the Ranas.

(4) Dharahara (*Attraction type: Historical monument/lookout*)

Also known as Bhimsen Tower to the local people, it is a 165 feet tall tower built by Premier Bhimsen Thapa in 1932. One fetches a panoramic view of the whole valley of Kathmandu from the top of the tower. It has been open for the general public since Magh 2061 B.S.



Ranipokhari

(5) Ranipokhari (*Attraction type: Historical pond/religious site*)

Situated in between Ratna Park and Jamal. This historical pond has been built by Pratap Malla to sympathize his beloved wife who was deeply shocked by the death of his son. The pond is opened for public only at the last day of Tihar - "Bhai Tika". Those who doesn't have any brothers or sisters visit Rani Pokhari to pay homage to Lord Shiva on that day.

(6) Nagpokhari (*Attraction type: Historical pond/religious site*)

Nagpokhari is situated at *Naxal*, at the eastern side of the *Royal Palace* along the main road stretching from *Thamel* upto *NaniKeshar Bahal*. Nagpokhari bears great religious and historical significance possessing perennial importance after Ranipokhari. Its overall importance gradually increased after the renovation as a park on the initiative of Her Late Majesty the Queen Aishwarya Rajya Laxmi Devi Shah. There are other historical and cultural heritages situated in and around Nagpokhari area mainly Royal Palace, Lal Durbar, NAFA Hall, Phohara Durbar, Naxal Bhagawati, Nandikeshar Bahal, Shankar Kriti Mahabihar etc. Naga Panchami is the festival of snakes celebrated on the fifth day of the bright fortnight in the month of shravan. Naga, the Snake God is one of the important deities worshipped by the Nepalese believing that Naga or Snake protects and fulfill their wishes. Great lord Shiva wears Nagas as garland on his neck.

3.1.3 Town Center/Street/Neighborhood :

(I) Thamel (*Attraction type: Street/neighbourhood*)

Thamel is action central. The number of shops, selling everything from antiques to hiking boots, seems uncountable. Signs jam every inch of wall space and nearly overwhelm the visitor. Trekking, rafting, travel agencies, hotels and guest houses bump up against one another—one can't imagine how so many businesses manage to survive. But they do, along with the tailors, jewelers, book shops, cassette dealers, and others who make the Thamel area a kaleidoscope of sights and sounds. There are three main shrines in Thamel. The Thamel Bahal is enroute to Kantipath. It consists of three temples known popularly as the "three sisters". During Dasain, the bahal is decorated with red paint and fresh green shoots. Devotees go to pay their respects and to celebrate the triumph of the goddess Durga over Mahisasur, the embodiment of evil. The last shrine juts out into a lane in Thamel. The stone figure of Durga is in its well-known stance, but the face has been restored in gilded metal. This small temple remains brightly lit throughout the night. Apart from legends, walking away from the royal palace towards Thamel, you'll find the Thamel Bahal guarded by stone griffins. Adjacent to it is Sanchaya Kosh, a large shopping arcade. The frenzied tourist activity in the surrounding area. To the right, the road leads to Bhagwan Bahal. There are still some old houses with fragments of carved window frames visible. Thamel's curio and antique shops are fun to browse in. Thamel is a book-lover's paradise. Both new and used books jam every inch of space in Thamel's book shops. Eating out is never a problem in Thamel. Restaurants serve Italian, Austrian, Indian, German, Thai, Chinese, Nepali, and Tibetan food. Pizza, burgers and fries, croissants, hot dogs, steak, and vegetarian specialties are readily available. By night Thamel is the social center of Kathmandu. Enjoy a few drinks while listening to oldies or the latest rock music. Watch a movie on video while enjoying your pizza. Meet up with friends old and new around the tables of Thamel's restaurants and bars. Or catch up with friends and family in other time zones through the international telephone and fax services now available throughout the area.

(2) Durbar Marg (*Attraction type: Street/Neighbourhood*)

Durbar Marg runs south from the gates of the Royal Palace and is Kathmandu's main upscale shopping and hotel street. Lining this wide avenue, you'll find expensive restaurants, deluxe hotels, and shops selling jewelry, imported clothing, and Tibetan antiques.

(3) Freak Street (*Attraction type: Street/Neighbourhood*)

Well-known in the days when Kathmandu was the hippie capital of the world, Freak Street is no longer the budget traveler's main lodging area in Kathmandu. However, shops and very cheap guest houses still line this street just south of Basantapur Square, which itself is at the southeast corner of Durbar Square. This area is a thriving center for bargaining, eating and meeting other travelers.

(4) Tundikhel (*Attraction type: Huge green field*)

A huge green field, flanks one entire side of the old city Tundikhel. Some of the important landmarks of Kathmandu valley are located in the periphery of this area. At the south western end of Tundikhel is a 59.29m. tower built by Prime Minister Bhimsen Thapa in 1832 A.D. known as *Dharahara* (or Bhimsen Stambha). *Sundhara-fountains* with golden water spouts is situated at the foot of this great tower also belonging to the same period.

3.1.4 Museums/Art Galleries

(1) National Museum (*Attraction type: History museum; Art museum*)

The National Museum is located at Chhauni which is close by the Swayambhunath Stupa. Religious, secular and military artifacts of all kinds are housed in the three buildings comprising this museum complex. Situated two and a half kilometers west of Kathmandu City, the National Museum has a splendid collection of arms, artifacts, statues, etc. from ancient, medieval and modern Nepal. Its archaeological and historical displays are real worth-seeing. It is a veritable storehouse of breathtaking bronze statues, rich collection of Paubha scroll paintings or thangka, leather cannons and relics of the Great Earthquake of 1934, along with the collection of terracotta. The museum is open everyday except Tuesday and government holidays. **National Numismatic Museum** Housed in the Mahendra Memorial Building of the National Museum at Chhauni, this museum contains a rare collection of Nepali coins spanning from the 2nd till the 18th Century, right across the reigns of the Licchavi, Thakuri, Malla and the Shah dynasties. Extraordinary exhibits on display include clay coins. The museum stands in old gardens and is ripe for renovation and upgrading in the same style as the Patan Museum. Open daily, except Sundays, Mondays and Holidays, from 9.00am to 4.30pm. Entrance fee Rs. 10/- for SAARC nationals and Rs.50/- for other nationalities. An extra Rs.50/- for cameras and Rs. 100/- for video cameras. (Phone: 4271478)

(2) Tribhuvan Museum (*Attraction type: Specialty Museum*)

This museum dedicated to one of Nepal's beloved kings is located in Hanuman Dhoka Palace and highlights the life of King Tribhuvan, chief architect of the liberation struggle against the

authoritarian rule of the Rana family in 1951. Exhibits include King Tribhuvan's childhood dresses, ceremonial costumes, personal belongings, including dioramas his bedroom and office room. The galleries display rare photographs, paintings, and portraits of other Shah rulers and members of the royal family. The Hanuman Dhoka Palace, also known as Nolchhen, used to be the seat of the Malla Kings of Kathmandu by Prithivi Narayan Shah in 1768. Your tickets entitle you to climb the Basantapur Tower and look out over the temples of Darbar Square. Cameras are not allowed inside the museum. Open daily, except Sundays, Mondays and holidays, from 9.15am to 4.00pm. Entrance fee is Rs.250/-. Cameras are not allowed (Phone: 4258034)

(3) Mahendra Museum (*Attraction type: Specialty Museum*)

Another attraction in the historic Hanuman Dhoka Palace complex, this section vividly sheds light on the life of late King Mahendra. The King's cabinet room, office chamber and personal belongings such as medals, decoration, gift, coins, stamps, and his literary creations are on exhibition. Open daily, except Sundays, Mondays and holidays, from 9.15am to 4.00pm. You can visit the Mahendra Museum with your ticket to the Tribhuvan Museum. (Phone: 4258034)

(4) Natural History Museum (*Attraction type: Museum*)

This museum is behind Swayambhunath Stupa and houses exhibits of animals, butterflies and plants. Open daily from 10:00 am till 4:00 pm, except Saturdays and government holidays. Stuffed animals, birds and crocodiles are a big draw at the museum, particularly for children. Open daily, except Saturdays and holidays, from 10.00am to 5.00pm. The entrance fee is Rs.20/- and an additional Rs.20/- for cameras. (Phone: 4271899)

(5) The National Birendra Art Gallery (*Attraction type: Art Gallery*)

The Nepal Association of Fine Arts (NAFA) at Naxal has a collection of about 150 art pieces by prominent Nepalese artists. Art exhibitions are held regularly, and there are also studios where artists can be seen at work. Housed in a fine old unrestored Rana palace, named Bal Mandir. Open daily except Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, from 9.00am to 5.00pm Entrance fee Rs.25/- (SAARC) and Rs.75/- for other foreign visitors. (Phone: 4411729)

(6) Woodcarving Studio (*Attraction type: Specialty shop*)

Nepal's ancient tradition of woodcarving still flourishes among the Newar community. You can find the collection of traditional window frame-styled photo frames, lamp stands, mirror stands, jewelry boxes, tables and a variety of furniture.

(7) Asa Archives (*Attraction type: Archives*)

The archives are located on the western fringe of the old part of Kathmandu, and possess an exceptional collection of about 7,000 loose-leaf handwritten books and over 1,200 palm-leaf documents. The oldest manuscript in the collection is dated 1242 A.D., and the manuscripts are in Sanskrit and the Newari Language (Nepalbhāsa), located at Tengal west of Nhyokha Tol. Open daily except Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, from 9.00am to 5.00pm (Phone : 4263417)

(8) Keshar Library (*Attraction type: Library*)

This library houses the collection of one man, Kaiser Shumsher Jung Bahadur Rana (1891-1964). Located in a palatial building on the corner of Tridevi Marg, Thamel and opposite the west end of the Royal Palace. It includes books, (over 45,000) covering unrelated topics such as astrology and law, history, hunting, religion and philosophy. This library is one of the finest and oldest libraries in Nepal that reflects the priorities, pursuits and interests of a bygone era. Here your search ends in the discovery of many interesting and rare books. Exquisitely framed photographs of eminent people are assets to this haven of knowledge. It is also like a museum harbouring a precious collection. This library waits to be discovered but more so, to impart knowledge to people. Open daily except Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, from 9.00am to 5.00pm (Phone: 4411318)

3.1.5 Scenic Attractions in Kathmandu

(1) Balaju Water Garden (*Attraction type: park/garden*)

Situated about five kilometers North-west of Kathmandu, Balaju Garden features fountains with 22 crocodile headed water spout dating from the mid eighteenth century. This is an interesting large compound sitting at the foot of Mount Nagarjun in the northeast corner of the Valley. Its premises include numerous worthy items. The important ones are the Twenty-Two Water Spouts, the replica image of Lord Buddhankantha, the Olympic size swimming pool, etc. Among all the attractions, the major one stands as the Twenty-Two Water Spouts and the whole compound uphill and downhill itself makes an enchanting picnic-spot for holiday-makers. The annual festival is celebrated on a full-moon day of the spring season. It is a merry day when many Nepalese Buddhists and Tibetan Buddhists hike up to the summit of Jamacho the starting point being Balaju or Lhuti.

(2) Sundarikal (*Attraction type: waterfalls/forest/nature reserve*)

At the northeastern edge of the Valley, the cool streams the eventually join the holy Bagmati River flow over the waterfalls at Sundarikal into a hundred year -old reservoir. This titanic reservoir was built during the time of the Ranas. Sundarikal is fifteen kilometers away from Kathmandu City and is also the starting point for the popular trek to Helambu- the nearest Sherpa village. The main reservoir which supplies drinking water to the valley is roughly an hour walk uphill from here. A tinier trail forks off before the reservoir to a small rock cave, where a thirteenth century image of Mahadevi (the great Goddess) can be found. It is a pleasant bike ride along the quiet roads past Gokarna. The long valley-rim walk, a minor trek that is, from Sundarikal to Nagarkot or vice-versa is suggestive to every enthusiastic trekker.

(3) Sankhu (*Attraction type: forest/field/Religious site*)

This is a peaceful small town the old name of which goes *Shankharpur* according to classical Sanskrit. The current name as referred by the local citizens goes Sakwo as well. It is situated at

the northeastern corner of the valley and served to be the exit point to Lhasa of Tibet in the earlier days. This trekking route was much used by the lucrative merchants of Nepal called the Lhasa-Newa. The whole town takes the shape of a 'Shankha', which signifies the conch-shell. This falls to be the sheer reason why it has come to be titled *Shankharapur* and inhabited by the bonafide indigenous natives of Newars who speak a special tonal dialect Tibeto-Burmese in nature. Two kilometers above the village on a hill is the Vajra Yogini Temple dedicated to another powerful Tantric deity. Lovely chlorophyll fields and forestations surround the area.

(4) Furping: (*Attraction type: Village/Religious site*)

This is a popular village amidst a lovely setting by the hillside. It is situated at the south-west corner of the Valley. Inhabited mostly by the Newars and the Tamangs both of whom are Buddhists by faith, the village is dotted with numerous Mahayan (Lamaism) monasteries. Another important sight is the Buddhist temple of Bajra-Yogini pertaining to the authentic philosophy of Bajrayan. A cave temple also bears an interesting tale of its own. There are healthy sectors abound with pine woods apart from the local bazaar. The Newars call this settlement Fumpi. The green premises of the one and only famous boarding high school established in 1952 assumes the name of 'paradise Garden'.

(5) Nagarjun Forest (*Attraction type: forest/nature reserve/bird watching*)

This hill above *Balaju* and the road leading to *Kakani* and *Trishuli* shelters a pristine forest barricaded at accessible points by walls. The entrance is guarded and a nominal fee is levied for entry inside. This is another good area for bird watching and the forest also harbors deer and pheasants. On the top of the hill is a Buddhist shrine and on the eastern slopes are two caves, one of which is dedicated to the Buddha, and the other to Nagarjuna, a famous South Indian philosopher.

(6) Shivapuri Wildlife Reserve (*Attraction type: hill/wildlife reserve/bird watching*)

The Shivapuri Hills behind Budhanilkantha is a fine area for bird watching, and on a clear day, the hilltop which is at a height of 2,732 meters offers a great view of the Central Nepal Himalaya, while providing a grand panorama of the Kathmandu Valley.

(7) Gokarna (*Attraction type: park/religious site/golf course*)

The sacred site for the Gokarna Aunshi pilgrimite is 4 km east of the Boudhanath Stupa situated at the banks of the Bagmati River. **Gokarna Mahadev Temple** is another Shiva shrine lying on a bed of stone cobras including a beautiful 8th-century carving of Parvati. Close to Gokarna village and the Gokarna Mahadev Temple is the 260 hectares of **Gokarna Park**, another favorite picnic spots for locals. Within its confines are a multitude of spotted deer and black bucks roaming in the open. There is also a **Golf course** where weekends find diplomats, expatriates and affluent Nepali honing their skills.

3.1.6 Traditions

FESTIVALS OF KATHMANDU

Maghe Sankranti : (*January*)

A Sankranti signifies the first day of any month in the Nepali calendar year. Makar means Capricorn. Makar Sankranti, therefore, means the first day of the month when the sun enters that part of the zodiac which is symbolized by Capricorn. It starts on its northward journey in its heavenly course on this day, thus announcing the commencement of the Uttarayan. In the Nepalese belief this day marks the division of the Winter and Summer solstice. Bathing in rivers is prescribed for this day, especially at the river confluence and feasting with rich foods of special preparation is common in the family.

Sri Panchami or Basant Panchami : (*February*)

It is the day consecrated to honor *Saraswati*, the Hindu Goddess of learning, throughout Nepal. *Saraswati* shrines all over the Kingdom are filled with the crowd of school children and other students on this day. Goddess *Saraswati* reigns over the realm of speech, letters, arts and sciences, and all her tools are worshipped accordingly, pens, ink, books, pencils, and spinning wheels. Around the city are seen numerous wedding processions. *Saraswati* temples at *Swayambhu* and *Neel Saraswati* at Gairidhara are worth visiting during the morning. Sri Panchami announces the advent of the spring season in Nepal. On this day a religious function known as Basanta Shrawan is held at the court-yard of Hanuman Dhoka Palace. On this occasion *Geet Govinda* (Verses written by Poet Jaya Dev) is recited by the royal priest and hymns are sung by a concert of musician in accompaniment with musical instruments. His Majesty the King graces the function.

Maha Shivaratri : (*February*)

This is the most famous and celebrated festival of Nepal which attracts large crowds from far-flung places both in India and Nepal. The festival as its very name suggests, is consecrated in honor of *Lord Shiva*. It is observed by bathing and holding of a religious fast. All Shiva shrines become the places of visit for dracaena, but the greatest attraction of all is held by the temple of *Pashupatinath* in Kathmandu. One gets to see hundreds of thousand of devout Hindus coming to visit the temple of Pashupati on this day. On this day religious Hindus worship *Lord Shiva* by offering flowers, garlands, '*bel patra*' (leaves of '*bet*' f rub), fruits, coins and so on and also by chanting prayers and hymns. Among them are a large number of Sadhus and ascetics.

Losar : (*February-March*)

Losar is the Tebetan New Year. This festival is most impressively observed by all the Tibetan-speaking populations. They organize folk songs and dances on this occasion. The *Sherpas* goes to Boudhanath on this occasion in Kathmandu. Losar is celebrated with prayers and feasts, and visits to relatives and friends.

Holi or Phagu Poornima : (March-April)

Holi is the festival of colour. It is observed for eight days just before the full moon of Phalgun during which time townsmen indulge in colour throwing at each other. The festival of colour is always heralded by the sticking of wooden pole known as chir with colourful streamers beside the old royal palace at Basantapur by the arrangement of the Government Religious Endowment (Guthi) Office. This festival is observed with most joy and gaiety in the Terai region of the country. The festival is terminated with the burning of the pole on the night preceding the Phalgun full moon.

Ghodejatra : (March-April)

Ghodejatra or the festival of horse is held on-the fourteenth of the dark half of the Chaitra (sometime in March or April). The festival has two sides of its celebration. Its cultural side involves the Newars of Kathmandu who celebrate it for several days. The idols of the gods of many localities are taken in a procession in their area in portable chariots. Every household is feasting at this time. A demon called 'Gurumumpa' is also propitiated at this time in Tundikhel. This festival is called *Pahachare*. The other aspect of the festival is provided by the function organised by the Royal Nepalese Army at Tundikhel in the afternoon of the main day. Horse race and acrobatic shows are presented at this time in which His Majesty the King is present. A meeting of Lumadi, Bhadrakali, Kankeshwari and Bhairav takes place during the day time at the main celebration at Ason. The deities are brought in their portable chariots.

Chaite Dashain : (March-April)

Dashain is a great festival of Nepalese people. In Nepal it is observed twice a year-once in the month of Chaitra and once in Ashwin (Sept-Oct.). The former is observed on the eighth of the bright half of the month of Chaitra. On this occasion goddess Bhagawati is worshipped and animal sacrifices are made to her. But this festival is not observed with so much pomp and grandeur as the one which is observed in Autumn.

Nava Barsha or New Year : (April 13 or 14th)

The Nepalese festivals follow round the traditional 'religious' Lunar Calendar in the same sequence. An exception is New Year Day, which always falls in the middle of April, observed throughout Nepal as the first day of the official Nepalese solar Calendar, i.e., the first day of Baisakh. This day is an official holiday for Nepal. The most important New year festival in the Valley is held at Bhaktapur City, located fourteen kilometers on east of Kathmandu. This festival is known as Bisket Jatra meaning the festival after the death of serpent. The main attraction of the festival is the erection of the 'lingo', a ceremonial pole, a thick, shorn tree-trunk some eighty feet in length. This is an exciting operation, for the pole, supported by bamboos and pulled by heavy ropes, must be made to rest in the centre hole of a large pile of cemented rocks. A large crowds from other town of the Valley assemble to watch this festival. During the week Bhairav, Bhadrakali and other goddesses are dragged in chariots in the town.

Festival of Seto Machchhendranath (March-April)

This is a four-day chariot festival held in honor of the White (Seto) Machchhendranath (to be distinguished from the Red (Rato) form of the same divinity in Patan), who is actually the *Padmapani Lokeshwara*, whose permanent shrine is situated at Janabahal in Kel Tole in the middle of the old bazaar in Kathmandu. A huge chariot of wood supported on four large wheels and carrying a tall spire covered with green foliage is made ready for receiving the image of the divinity on this occasion and for dragging in the old part of city.

Matatirtha Aunsi or Mother's Day (April)

This day is observed as the Mother's Day with the expression of proper regards towards one's mother. It is individually performed by persons out of filial piety. Those whose mothers are already dead go to bathe and offer ablutions to their dead mothers at Matatirtha near Thankot village. The fortunate ones whose mothers are alive present her with gifts of sweetmeats and receive blessing from them.

Buddha Jayanti : (full moon day of April/May)

Buddha Jayanti is a great day for the Nepalese. This day which falls on the full moon of the month of Baisakh is celebrated to commemorate the birth, attainment of enlightenment and the death of *Gautama Buddha*, the founder preacher of Buddhism, more than 2500 Years ago. It is a thrice blessed day. It is the day when Buddha was born, when he was enlightened and when he got Nirvana (Salvation). prayers are sung and worship is offered by the devotees in leading Buddhist shrines throughout the country including Lumbini in the Rupandehi district, which is the birth place of Lord Buddha, the Light of Asia. There is a great fair held at Lumbini on this day.

Ghanta Karna : (June -July)

Ghanta Karna is also known as '*Gathyamuga*'. This festival is a relic of the belief in demonolatry by the people of the Valley. Ghanta Karna, a demon and other evil spirits are propitiated and exercised on this day. An effigy made of green reeds is erected at all the main cross-roads of the town in the day. A person is painted in all kinds of colour till he looks like a grotesque figure representing the demon Ghanta Karna. This symbolic demon goes begging in the locality. At the end of the day he is dragged to a river on the green reeds symbolizing the driving away of the demon from the locality.

Naga Panchami : (July-August)

This is devoted to the worship of the *Nagas*, the divine serpents. Pictures of the Naga are stuck over the doorposts of all the houses in the morning as protective spells. This is also the day for the beginning of Gunialakhe dance in Kathmandu in which persons wearing masks of a demon entertain the people with their gimmick. People visit *Nagpokhari*, dedicated to Naga, the snake God.

Janai Poornima (Rokshya Bandhan) (July-August)

The full-moon of the month of Shrawan, the day when this festival is observed, is considered sacred all over Nepal and is celebrated in different manner by different groups of people of Nepal. However, the most widely accepted mode of celebration is that on this day people take a ritual bath and change their sacred thread. Everyone gets a string of thread tied in his wrist from the Brahmans as a protective mark for the whole year. The Nepalese prepare a special dish called 'Kwati', (mixed sprouted beans) on this day. This day is also held sacred for bathing in *Gosainkunda*. One can also see a pageantry of the *Jhankris* (witch doctors) attired in their traditional costume come to bathe at *Kumbheshwor* at Patan. These *Jhankris* also visit the temple of *Kaiinchowk Bhagavati* (the goddess at Kalinchowk) in Dolkha district where they go to beg for their healing powers, as they are the traditional healers of the Nepalese villagers.

Gaijatra : (July-August)

In this festival teen-aged boys dressed up in the attire of a cow parade in the streets of the town. This custom spring from the belief that cows help the members of the family, who have died within that year, to travel to heaven smoothly. Some are also dressed up as an ascetic or a fool for achieving the same objective to their dead family members. Groups of mimics improvise short satirical enactments on the current sociopolitical scenes of the town to the entertainment of the public. The week beginning from Janai Poornima actually unfolds a season of good many religious and cultural activities. All the Buddhist monasteries open their gates to the visitors to view their bronze sculptures and collection of painting for a week. The spirit of the old festival is being increasingly adapted by Cultural Centres, newspapers and magazines of fling humor and satire on the Nepalese social and political life.

Pancha Dan: (July-August)

This is a Buddhist festival in which gifts are made by the laity to the monks. Since monastic Buddhism has been long extinct in Nepal, the receivers of the gift today are the Buddhist priests, the *Shakyas* and the *Vajracharyas*, who go begging aims to the house of their clients. Mainly food grains are offered on this occasion to the begging priests. Traditional collections of artifacts are displayed in monasteries and households on this occasion.

Gokarna Aunsi or Father's Day: (August-September)

This day is observed as the Father's Day with the expression of proper regards towards one's father. It is individually performed by persons out of filial piety. Those whose fathers are already dead go to bathe and perform shraddha ceremony in honor of their dead fathers at Gokarna. The fortunate ones whose fathers are alive present him with gifts of sweetmeat and delectable food and drink and receive blessings in return from them.

Gunla (August)

A Newar Buddhist holy month, celebrated at *Swayambhunath*, Kathmandu.

Teej and Rishi Panchani: (August-September)

Teej or *Haritalika* is purely a women's festival. These two days follow in close succession and are the days of observing religious fast for women folks of Nepal. On the day of Teej all the women observe fasting for twenty-four hours for the longevity of their husbands' life and go to visit the shrine of Pashupati and offer worship to *Lord Shiva* and his consort *Parvati* later in the evening. The Panchami is mainly devoted to cleaning the body by taking ritual bath in rivers for any sin or impurity the women folks may have committed during the past year. On this day women worship the seven *Rishis* in reminiscence of a high ascetic tradition of Hinduism and a notion of purity of descent in their lineage from the ancestral *Rishis*. All women whose husbands are alive are seen wearing red garments invariable and decked in all sorts of jewelry on these two days.

Indrajatra: (August-September)

Indrajatra heralds a week of religious and cultural festivity in Kathmandu. There are several foci of this festival. On the night when this festival begins, members of the family in which death has taken place within one year go round the town limits of Kathmandu burning incense and putting lamps along the route. The same morning a tall wooden pole representing the standard of *Indra*, the king of gods is erected in front of the Hanuman Dhoka Palace. Wooden statues of *Indra* and large wooden masks of *Bhairav* are put on display in the old bazaar. Several groups of religious dance like the *Devinach*, *Majipat Lakhe*, *Bhairav* and *Bhakku and Mahakali Nach* come into life during this week. The week also commences the dragging of chariots of *Ganesh*, *Bhairav* and *Living Goddess Kumari* in Kathmandu. His Majesty the King comes to pay homage to *Kumari* just before the start of the chariot-pulling.

Dashain (September-October)

It is truly the national festival of Nepal. Every Nepali is stirred by the prospects of the joy this festival is supposed to bring with it. The change of mood is also induced psychologically by the turn off autumn season after blue sky and a green carpet of fields. The climate is also put ideal at this time, it neither being too cold nor too warm. The Nepalese cherish their Dashain as a time for eating well and dressing well. The whole festival lasts a total of ten days. The first nine days are devoted to worship the goddess *Durga Bhavani* and her diverse manifestations. Each house also sets up a shrine to worship the goddess at this time. Barley seeds are planted on the first day in every household and nurtured for nine days. During the nine days goddess *Durga Bhavani* is worshipped and offered a lot of blood sacrifice. Buffaloes, goats and chickens are killed in thousands at the temples, at military posts and in every household. One of the main centres that witnesses the animal sacrifice in a large scale at this time is the Hanuman Dhoka Palace on the night of the eighth day and the morning of the ninth. On the concluding day of the festival called the *Tika*, the elders of the family give tika to their junior members and to other relatives who may also come to seek their blessing. The fresh shoots of the barley known as '*Jamara*' are also given to wear. Family feasting and feasting of guests is a common practice at this time. On the day of *Vijaya Dashami* people go to Narayanhity Royal Palace to receive *tika* from their Majesties the King and the Queen.

Tihar, Laxmi Puja and Nhoo Da (Newari New Year): (October-November)

The festival of lights comes just after a fortnight of the departure of *Dashain* from the scene. The earlier festival mood helped on by the turn of a genial weather continues to glow the mind of the Nepalese during this festival also. The festivity lasts for five days and is marked by worship to different animals such as the crow, the dog and the cow on different days. Perhaps the most endearing sight of this festival is presented by the illumination of the entire town with rows of tiny flickering lamps at the duskbreak on the day of *Laxmi Puja*. In the evening of this day, the goddess of wealth, *Laxmi*, is worshipped at every household and it is in her welcome that myriad of lamps are burnt. On the day of *Mha-puja*, Newari New Year day is celebrated by the Newar community, dedicated to Shankadhar Shakwa, founder of Newari calendar. On the New Year Day, you can see different Newari culture, dresses, music, dance at Basantapur, Hanuman Dhoka. Women play '*Bhailo*' on the third day, and men play '*Deusi*' on the fourth day visiting door to door singing and dancing and blessing each household with long life and prosperity. The family in return gives them food and cash as a mark of goodwill. On the last day *Bhaitika*, sisters show their affection towards their brothers with the performance of a puja and feed them with delectable food. They pray for their brother's long life to *Yama*, the Hindu god of death.

Bala Chaturdashi: (November-December)

Pilgrims from ail over Nepal throng at Pashupati temple from the night before and burn an oil lamp to the god for the whole night. In the morrow they take a holy dip in the sacred water of the Bagmati, pay obeisance to Pashupati and traverse the route prescribed for that occasion scattering 'a hundred variety of seeds' in Kailash forest of Pashupati so that their dead relations may reap the fruit of this merit in the next world.



Lakhe Dance

DANCE

Both spatial and temporal in nature dance derives its liveliness from music which is merely temporal. In Hindu mythology, *Lord Shiva* is the *Natraj*, the supreme king of dancing, and when he danced his '*Tandab Nritya*', the whole planet earth was violently shaken. Since then classical dance has been based mainly on religion and myth. The Newars of the Kathmandu Valley are the main exponents of classical dancing, with masked dances with a Tantric background, and in particular the '*Lakhe nach*', '*Mahakali masked dance*.' Several groups of religious dance like the *Devinach*, *Majipat Lakhe*, *Bhairav* and *Bhakku and Mahakali Nach* come into life during Indrajattra festival. As well, among the monasteries of Bouddhanath Tibetan masked dancing by monks can be seen at certain times of the year during celebrations and anniversaries.

3.1.7 Arts, architecture and Handicrafts

Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal is the storehouse of Nepali arts and architecture. You can find so many temples and statues in the streets, every other building is a temple in the city. For this reason this valley is also known as the city of temples and shrines. There are over 2,500 big temples and monuments in the small valley. The art and architecture of Kathmandu is inspired by Hindu and Buddhist religion and culture. Kathmandu is endowed with such arts and sculpture. Here are the facts about some of the famous architectural designs of Kathmandu:

Pagoda Style : The pagoda style temple is Nepal's unique architectural contribution to the world. The pagoda style of architecture refers to multi-roofed structure with wide eaves of the roof supported by carved wooden struts. The roofs are either topped with tiles or plated with copper gilt. A pagoda temple roof is topped off by spires. The windows are generally latticed and the doors carved. Nepal is the only country having so many temples made in the pagoda style. Some of the pagoda style temples are Changu Narayan, Pashupatipath, Taleju, Kasthamandap, Nyatapola etc.

Stupa Style : Another important style of architecture of Nepal is represented by the Stupa which is known as *Chaitya* also. The stupa style of architecture is Buddhist in concept. A Stupa is a solid hemispherical mound of earth, bricks or stones with a square base at the top. The square top supports a series of thirteen circular rings narrowed towards the top, and is crowned by a parasol. The four sides of the square base are painted with pairs of eyes. The eyes represent the eyes of Buddha, the founder of Buddhism. Some examples of the Stupa style of architecture are Swayambhunath stupa, Bouddhnath stupa etc.

Shikhara Style : This is a tall pyramidal structure. It has either five or nine sections. The final section consists of bell-shaped top. This architectural style is actually Indian in origin. The famous example of this design is Krishana Mandir of Patan. Other better known examples of this style are the Mahabouddha temple and Jagat Narayan temple in Patan, the Vatsala temple in Bhaktapur and the Gorakhnath temple in Kathmandu.

3.1.8 Entertainment in Kathmandu

Night life: The most interesting after-dark activity is simply wandering the streets of old Kathmandu. As you wander the streets at night, listen for traditional Nepali music. In the evenings, impromptu bands often perform at small temples all over the city. This is also a good time to do your shopping since many shops catering to tourists stay open until 9pm. If you're dying to experience video night in Kathmandu, check the restaurants around Thamel. Many show videos of the latest Hollywood releases. There's also a video theater at the Kathmandu Guest House..

Pubs: Pubs and bars around Kathmandu offer a lively atmosphere in the late hours. Some of these feature live local bands who present renditions of past and present Western hits. Most are located in and around the tourist area of Thamel. A wide range of drinks, including punches and cocktails, can be found in these establishments. There may be temptation to try Nepali liquor but stand warned that it is a bit too strong both to the palate and the gullet. Opt for cocktails and punches. The barmen are sure to offer you a variety of cosmopolitan concoctions including a few that have been formulated locally. The best among hard liquor produced in Nepal are Himalayan Brandy, Snowland Gin, Bagpiper Whisky, Ruslan Vodka and Khukuri Rum. On the other hand locally manufactured beer happens to be good. Resulting from a combination of Nepal's Himalayan waters and technical collaboration with celebrated international master brewers like Carlsberg, Tuborg, and San Miguel, the beers of Nepal stand at par with top world brands. Some of the interesting bars and pubs are:

Blue Note Bar/New Orleans Café	Bars & Pubs
Maya Cocktail Bar	Bars & Pubs
Maya Pub.	Bars & Pubs
Rum Doodle	Bars & Pubs
The Tunnel Club	Bars & Pubs
Tom & Jerry's	Bars & Pubs
Underground	Bars & Pubs
Holiday KTV	Karoke Bar

Cultural Shows/Lok Dohari Restaurants: This is one way to get a taste of Nepal's varied cultural traditions without taking much trouble. The Lok Dohari Restaurants present Nepali cultural programs during dinnertime. Dance troupes with musical accompaniment perform a variety of Nepali folk and classical dances. These are usually performed before dinner beginning at 7:00 pm and run for an hour and a half or so. That gives you enough time to enjoy a few drinks before your order is served. To soak in the ambience of totally Nepali experience, Nepali dishes are recommended for such an evening.

Casino: Used to be a time when Kathmandu was famous for having the only casino between the Suez and Singapore. That has changed now but Nepal's casinos still find favor with people with a penchant for gambling and with those just wanting to try their luck. Casino Nepal operates a chain of 4 casinos around Kathmandu which stay open 24 hours a day. The casinos are located in all of the 5-star hotels of Kathmandu, i.e. Soaltee Crowne plaza, Yak & Yeti, Hotel de l' Annapurna, Radisson Hotel, Hyatt Regency and the Everest Hotel. Casino Nepal offers complimentary transportation from select hotels in their shuttle coaches, and also provide on-the-house snacks and beverages to players of big stakes. Games operated in the four casinos are roulette, blackjack, baccarat, pontoon, flush, and rummy. And there are plenty of one-armed bandits (slot machines) for those that want to tackle them. The famous casinos operating in Nepal are:

Casino Nepal	– Soaltee Crowne Plaza, Tahachal, Kathmandu, Tel: 4280588
Casino Anna	– Hotel de L’Annapurna, Durbar Marg, Kathmandu, Tel: 4228650
Casino Royale	– Hotel Yak & Yeti, Durbar Marg, Kathmandu, Tel: 4225550
Casino Everest	– Hotel Everest, New Baneshwor, Kathmandu, Tel: 4780925
Casino Rad	– Radisson Hotel, Lazimpat, Kathmandu, Tel: 4421288
Casino Tara	– Hyatt Regency, Boudha, Kathmandu, Tel: 4482517

Disco and Dance Restaurants: Different disco theques are operating in Kathmandu. Some of the famous Disco theque in Kathmandu are Babylon Disco, Galaxy, Club Dynasty, Royal Disco, Fire Disco, Club Platinum, etc. Similarly, there are different dance restaurants around Kathmandu.

Gazals: A popular spot for Nepalis dining out is the gazal restaurants. These are Indian-style restaurants (but which offer Chinese and Continental cuisine as well) where singers perform live. The songs are generally popular Nepali and Hindi songs and, hence, are not strictly “gazal” restaurants. There are, however, a few that have gazals (soulful Urdu songs) only on their repertoire.

3.1.9 Special Interest

Ceramics and Pottery: Pre-historic pottery of Nepal consists of red, brown or black shades on unglazed surfaces. Excavation on various sites in the Kathmandu Valley have revealed specimens of ancient potteryware. They are usually terracotta unglazed, although a few pieces of glazed pottery have been found. Most of Nepalese potteryware is for utilitarian purposes, such as container jars, water pitchers, lamps, washing bowls, flower vases, and chilims-small objects used in religious worship. The pottery clay is found in the Kathmandu Valley. Black terracotta is another variety of folk pottery.

Bronze & Metal: Nepal, specially Kathmandu is an ‘Aladdin’s Cave’ for shoppers, with reliable original antiques, along with reproductions of antiques plus masks, woodcarvings, and metal work all made to look old. From the beginning Nepal produced beautiful art work in metal. In temples of the Kathmandu valley there are copper statues made from the lost wax process that can be dated back to the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D. Along with casting the Nepalese are experts in repousse - hammer beaten brass and copper works. There are life size repousse images of Ganga and Jamuna in the three royal palaces of the Kathmandu Valley. The copper and brass sheets are beaten by hammer into the required shape and then gold is applied. Many tympanums, the royal statues of the three cities supported by the tall monolithic stone pillars are done this way. The golden gate of Bhaktapur, the golden windows of Patan durbar and Hanuman Dhoka are the best examples of these.

Gold Jewelry: Jewelry is closely associated with a culture's aesthetic ideals, with its sensuous contours, the glistening patterns of its stones - even materials from which they are made - all reveal a culture's impassioned view about what is beautiful. The Newar craftsmen of the Kathmandu valley created amulet boxes adorned with both Hindu and Buddhist iconography for their customers, Jewelry plays a significant role in Buddhist and Hindu iconography, with the gods and goddesses of these traditions richly adorned with abundant jewelry- crowns, earrings, necklaces, armlets, anklets, finger and toe rings. Along with the gold the Himalayan stones of coral, amber and turquoise decorate the amulets, the jewelry, the ornaments, rings, earrings, and necklaces, and even belts. Hunting among the antique, metal and jewelry shops of Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur is a shopper's delight.

Semi Precious Stones: The artistic finesse of Nepal is also seen in semi precious stones like coral, quartz and crystal. Hindus of Nepal use as pendant statue of a multiarmed Ganesh carved in coral, and some wear a ring carved from coral. The real art works are all handmade with traditional technology and of course their price reflects these age old techniques. In Thamel, there are bead shops which sell beads for jewellery, using coral, amber, turquoise and silver made up, or loose to design yourself.

Masks: The gods are on the one hand, the demons on the other, representing good and evil; they are the two radical opposing forces in Hindu mythology who have been fighting ever since the beginning of creation itself. Masked dances are performed in Nepal on almost every major religious occasion, like *Gajjatra*, *Indra Jatra*, *Pachalibhairab Jatra*, etc. and the dancers are mostly gardeners from the Newar community. At Bouddhanath you can see many old wooden masks which are quite old and have an antique or art value, and Thimi is the place to see the paper and clay masks including the masters turning a lump of clay into a beautiful masked wall hanging.

Handmade paper (Lokta paper): The Nepalese handmade paper is called "*kancho kagaz*" This paper is ancient in origin. Nepali paper is used in making kites, dolls and toys, papier mache, calendars, envelopes and writing material, in writing horoscopes, mandalas and thangka painting. The raw material of Nepali paper still grows wild; it has not been cultivated as yet. The common name for the bark is Lokta. Handmade paper production can be seen very easily on the edges of the Kathmandu Valley. More enterprising entrepreneurs are now pressing petals, flowers and leaves into the paper and are making wallpapers, lamp shades and other designer items.

Tibetan Woollen Carpets: The famed Tibetan woollen carpets are found aplenty. In Durbar Marg and Bouddhanath there are antique stores selling old carpets from Nepal and Tibet. The modern carpets, copies of old Tibetan designs, are woven with New Zealand or Tibetan wool, and mostly with reliable Swiss dyes, but vegetable dye rugs or carpets are sought after and can be found. As well there are modern designs, and of course they all come in different qualities, ranging from 60 knot to 100 knot.

Textiles: Raw materials for textiles are abundant in Nepal, and with the contrasting climates and altitudes there has been a wealth of materials which for centuries have been extracted, spun, twisted and woven into a multitude of textiles. Textiles in Nepal are woven, knitted, crocheted, plaited or braided. The most remarkable and visible cotton textiles are the intricately patterned, colourful cotton panels used for caps for men, and blouses and shawls for women, called *Dhaka-cloth*. A lovely cotton, with a very free design, very much up to the individual weaver, with no two pieces the same. The Limbus and Rais of the mid-mountains are famous for their Dhaka cloth. *Pashmina shawls* and *lambswool shawls* are everywhere, plus jumpers and cardigans from Cashmere, and some handknitted jumpers in local colours and designs. Cashmere, Pashmina shawls are in demand in Tokyo, New York, Paris, London etc. *Yak hair* is made into shelters, ropes and clothing, yak skin for shoes, saddle bags and straps. *Sheep's wool* was made into rainproof Nepalese woollen blankets that were used for trading items 2,000 years ago; and now woven clothing, blankets and rugs are still in use in the mountain areas. The most attractive Sherpa woollen front apron is woven from sheep's wool, hand spun and coloured with multi coloured natural dyes. *Silk* is also used in the pashmina and silk combined shawls. *Jute goods and raw jute* are important export items for Nepal to India and Bangladesh. Within Nepal the *jute* is sold to the mills in the Terai where it is machine spun and made into sack cloth and rope.

Thangkas: Painting is the mother of all forms of art. Wall paintings, frescos and mural paintings are found in the Kathmandu valley, with whole rooms painted without an inch uncovered, showing both religious and secular themes. Thangka painting in Nepal was used to describe the complicated tantric philosophy which also worked as a visual aid to a layman. The two types of thangka painted are the Newari Thangka and the Tamang Thangka. The Newari thangkas have gods, Buddhist gods dominating the whole canvas, while the Tamang thangkas mostly depict mandalas, the life of Buddha and the wheel of life. Throughout Kathmandu valley, Thangka schools and painters can be visited, and time can be spent learning, listening and watching the artists at their work.

Woodcarving: In the annals of the art and architectural treasures of Nepal wood has been the most common material used for carving. Besides the struts, windows of various designs, the peacock window, the Desemaru Jhya, meaning the unparalleled one, fake and lattice windows have added to the beauty of Nepalese temples and monasteries. They have beautiful carvings on their pillars and door-frames, lintels and cornices. There are intricate carvings of a number of animals and birds including the story of Ramayana. These temples have erotic carvings at the bottom of their roof struts, a symbol of the tantric cult.

Khukuri: Khukuris, curved steel knives used by the Gurkha soldiers, are particularly a popular souvenir to take back home. An authentic khukuri should have a notch on its blade near the handle. Sheathed together with the khukuri in the scabbard are two tiny knives: one is the karda which is used for sharpening the khukuri, and the other called a chakmak is for striking a flintstone to make fire.

3.2 AMENITIES IN KATHMANDU

Facilities are a necessary aid to the tourist centre. The elements of services added to any other three elements gives rise to tourism. So, amenity is one of the basic elements of tourism. Amenities are facilities added to the attractions, accommodation transportation. These include facilities and services provided by the government, travel agencies or middlemen or commission agents, hotels, airlines and transport companies, financial institutes, insurance agents. etc.

Foreign Exchange: Foreign currencies must be exchanged only through the banks or authorized foreign exchange dealers. The receipts from such transaction are to be obtained and retained . Visitors can also exchange money at the foreign exchange counter at the airport upon arrival. Credit cards like American Express, Visa and MasterCard are accepted. Encashment slip must be retained for changing back the local currency to foreign upon departure.

Customs Formalities: All baggage must be declared and cleared through the custom on arrival at the entry. Personal effects are permitted free entry. A tourist may bring in dutiable goods , such as tobacco and liquor with in the prescribe quantity free of duty . Carrying narcotics ,arms and ammunition are strictly prohibited. Visitors can export souvenirs to their respective countries. The export of antiques requires special certificate from the department of Archaeology, National Archive Building, Ramshah path, Kathmandu.(Tel :215358).

Airport Tax: Rs. 600 per person for deprture to SAARC countries and Rs. 1000 fordeprtature to other internationals.

Tourist Police: A special unit of the Nepal Police called Tourist Police deals with problems related to tourists. One can contact the Nepal Tourism Board, Bhrikutimandap (Tel: 256909) to avail the services of Tourist police.

Banks: Nepal Rastra Bank, Central Bank of Nepal, has granted official authorization to many foreign exchange counters in Kathmandu. Most of the banks in Kathmandu are open between 10:00 A. M. to 2.30 P. M. from Mondays to Fridays. They are closed on Saturdays, Sundays and other holidays. Some banks also offers 365 days banking, mobile banking, 24 x 7 banking. Most of the banks have offered credit cards, debit cards, ATM facilities. Some of the popular banks of Kathmandu are – Nepal Rastriya Banijya Bank, Standard Chartered Bank Nepal, Nepal Bank Ltd., Bank of Kathmandu, Nepal Investment Bank, Kumari Bank, Nepal Industrial and Commercial Bank, Nabil Bank, Nepal-Bangladesh Bank, Himalayan bank, Everest Bank etc. ATM facilities is available in the main city areas. Besides these banks, there are many authorized foreign exchange counters. There are several restaurants, hotels and travel agencies who are authorized too, to process foreign exchange. US dollar is the most acceptable mode of currency. Most travel and trekking agencies, hotels, restaurants, shops price their product either in Nepali currency or in US dollars.

Money Transfer: Money can be received from anywhere in the world through Western Union Money Transfer, IME Money Transfer etc. with its branches located at the various parts of the valley.

Postal Services: The Central Post Office located near Dharhara Tower is open from Monday to Friday. The counters are open from 700hrs. to 1600hrs. and provide stamps, postcards and aerograms. Post restante is available Monday to Friday 900 hrs. to 1700hrs. Express mail service is available at GPO and at Thamel, Basantapur and airport postal counters. The postal rates of Nepal are unbelievably cheap compared to the rest of the world.

Cargo and Couriers: The couriers and clearing and forwarding agents operating in Kathmandu are DHL International, Federal Express, TNT Express Worldwide, UPS United Parcel Service., Atlas packers and movers, Cargo Channel, Swift Air Cargo etc.

Communications: Kathmandu is well connected to most countries of the world via satellite telecommunication systems. Telephone, fax, e-mail, internet, telex and telegraph service are available in Kathmandu. Hotels and private communication centers also provide long distance calls and email and internet services. You can enjoy the facilities of e-mail and internet in Kathmandu. There are various cybercafes around Kathmandu city. You can access dial-up internet connection, wireless internet, lease-line and also cable internet. If you find a signboard reading “e-mail and Internet facility available here” then just hop in and connect to the world. Most cybercafes also have the ISTD (International Standard Trunk Dialing) and STD facility. Enterprises specializing in fax, e-mail and secretarial services can be found around Kathmandu. The call center in Kathmandu is Ask Me (Tel 4360000).

Licensed Guides: All the travel agencies of Kathmandu have licensed English-speaking guides, however, many agencies also have guides who can speak other international languages for the convenience of tourists. As unlicensed guides are not allowed to serve clients, it is advisable to confirm that your guide has a valid license. To have a quality service it is recommended to arrange the sightseeing programs only through the government registered travel agencies.

Hospitals And Drug Stores: The hospitals, drug houses, dispensaries and pharmaceutical shops of Kathmandu sell all kinds of medicines, including those imported from overseas. The major general hospitals and private clinics are available in Kathmandu Valley. Some of the hospitals are: Bir Hospital, Teaching Hospital, MediCare Hospital, Om Hospital, National Hospital, etc.

Veterinary Services: For all veterinary needs there are excellent veterinary hospitals in the Kathmandu Valley. Some of them are: National Pet Polyclinic, KTM Animal Trust, Veterinary Hospital, Mount Everest Kennel Club etc.

Newspapers And Magazines: One can easily get all leading national and international newspapers and magazines in any bookshop in Kathmandu. The major newspapers in Kathmandu

are: The Rising Nepal (Daily)-English, The Kathmandu Post (Daily)- English, The Himalayan Times (Daily)-English, Gorkhapatra (Daily)-Nepali, Kantipur (Daily) - Nepali. The major magazines are Nepal-weekly, Samaya, Himal, Nepali Times, The Spotlight, The Nation-weekly, Young Herald, The Boss (Business magazine), VOW (women magazine), Nari (Women magazine) Space (Interior-magazine), Wave (youngsters magazine), The Rocks, The Footsteps, Infotiser etc. Besides Kathmandu has a rich collection of books, available in various bookshops. Books on travel, cooking, yoga and meditation, and guidebooks, novels, comics are available in the town. Besides these, there are language books, maps, and postcards.

Radio/F.M. Stations: Radio Nepal broadcasts different programs in both short wave and medium wave transmissions through three sessions in a day from 6:00 A.M. to 11 P.M. FM Radio program also broadcasts pop music and other programs for entertainment. English news bulletins are broadcast daily between 8 A.M. and 8 P.M. Various F.M. stations are operating 24 hours a day in Kathmandu. Some of the famous FM stations in Kathmandu are Kantipur FM, K.A.T.H F.M., Hits F.M. Radio HBC, Sagarmatha F.M., Metro F.M. , Ratiocity etc.

Television: Nepal television and Nepal 2 Metro are the national television. The private Nepali TV channels in Kathmandu are Kantipur Television, Image Channel, Channel Nepal and Nepal 1. Various Cable networks are operating in Kathmandu such as Space Time Network, Sky Cable, etc. They broadcast the international channels.

Department Stores and Shopping centers: The top supermarkets and departmental stores in Kathmandu are: Bhatbhateni Supermarket, Bluebird Departmental Store, Bluebell Fashionwear, Central Department Store, La Dynasty, Bishal Bazaar, Namaste Supermarket, Park n' Shop, China Town, The First Floor Shop, Akuj, Blue Moon, Fresh House, Gemini Grocer, Kasthamandap Bazaar, Salesways, Grihini Departmental store, etc. The new arrivals clothing and fashion can be found in UFO Clothing Store, Station, Maya, Jamal Bazaar, Vastra, Gossip, Appare, A.N.F. Authentic New Fashion, Benetton Store, Together Fashion etc.

Library: Some of the libraries in Kathmandu are: Keshar Library, British Council, American Center, AWON Library, Alliance Francaise etc.

Cinemas: Some of the world class cinema theatres in Kathmandu are Jai Nepal Cinema, Kumari Cinema, Gopi-Krishna-Radha Hall, Asta Narayan Pictures, Barahi movies, Guna Cinema, etc. Jai Nepal and Kumari also shows new releases English movies.

Art Galleries: Some of the art galleries in Kathmandu are Park Gallery, Kalinta Picture Framing, Siddhartha Art Gallery, Ragini Art Village and Gallery, Gajendra art Gallery, Wild fibers Gallery etc.

Beside these, Kathmandu has access to infrastructures like electricity, gas, drinking water, sewage system, transportation, health facilities, security and service infrastructure like hotel accommodation, airlines, travel agencies, trekking agencies, rafting agencies and so on.

3.3 ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility is another important component of tourism. It is the means by which a tourist can reach the destination. Accessibility is related to the possibility to visit, to feel to see or to watch the events, to realise or understand and experience. Tourist attractions of whatever type would be of little importance if the locations are inaccessible by the normal means of transport. Transportation is the necessary pre-condition for tourism.

Access to Kathmandu by Air :

Air transport is the modern and efficient means of transport system in the world which helps the people to reach long distances within a short time. The Tribhuvan International Airport is the one and only international airport of the country. The Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation (RNAC) is the national flag carrier of Nepal with Flights to/ from Kathmandu. The Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation (RNAC) was established on 1st July 1958.

RNAC	
Bangkok	2.5 hrs
Calcutta	1.00 hrs
Delhi	1.15 hrs
Dubai	4.11 hrs
Frankfurt	10.00hrs
Hongkong .	5 hrs
Mumbai	2.20 hrs
Osaka	7.20 hrs
Paris	11.00hrs
London	12.00 hrs
Shanghai	4.50 hrs
Singapore	4.30hrs

Other International Airlines operating from /to Kathmandu are :

Aeroflot Russain Airlines	SU	Moscow	9.30 hrs
Austrin Airlines	OS	Vienna	7.50 hrs
Biman Bangladesh Airlines	BS	Dhaka	1.10 hrs
China South West Airlines	SZ	Lhasa	1.05 hrs
Condor	NA	Munich	
Druk Air	KB	Paro	1.00 hrs
Gulf Air	GF	Abu Dhabi	4.15 hrs
Indian Airlines	IC	Delhi, Calcutta ,Varanasi	1.00 hrs
Necon Air	3Z	Patna, Calcutta	1.00 hrs
Pakistan Airlines	PK	Karachi	2.45 hrs
Singapore Airlines	SQ	Singapore	4.30 hrs
Qatar Airways	QR	Dhoha	4.25 hrs
Thai International	TG	Bangkok	3.00 hrs
Transavia	HV	Amsterdam Via Sharja	13.00 hrs

ALL flying hours are only approximate.

Domestic Airlines :

Royal Nepal Airlines (RA) has an extensive network of air service in the interior of Nepal . RA flies to Taplejung, Bhadrapur, Rajbiraj ,Bhjpgur, Phaplu, Lukla , Lamidada , Tumlingtar, Rumjatar, Biratnagar , Nepalgunj. Chaurijari ,Shurket , Rolpa , Jumla , Kolti, Mahendranagar, Dhangadi, Silgadi , Tikapur , Sanphebagar , Baitadi , and Darchula. Beside RA, other domestic airlines such as Buddha Air, Cosmic Air, lumbani Air , Gorkha Airlines, Mankamana Airways, Karnali Air Service, Necon Air, Shangrila Air, Skyline Airlines and Yeti Airways provide regular and charter services to popular domestic destinations.

Access to Kathmandu by Land :

All visitors entering Nepal by land must use no other entry points other than (1)Kakarbhitta (2) Birgunj (3) Belhiya , Bhairahawa (4) Nepa;gunj (5) Dhangadi and (6) Mahendra Nagar in the Nepal-India border and (7) Kodari in the Nepal- China border. The overland tourist entering the Kingdom with their vehicles must possess an international carnet.

Getting Around Kathmandu :

Travelling around Kathmandu is not so difficult or time-consuming. The Valley is pretty well-connected by public transport. There are taxi with fare meters in the Kathmandu valley. Motorcycles, bicycles and rickshaws are also available. The only problem with using public buses, mini buses and safe tempo is that they tend to be overcrowded and take a long time in reaching their destination. Making your own private arrangement for getting around is, therefore, more advisable. Chauffeur-driven private vehicle are also available in Kathmandu. Also operating on fares by the seat together with the buses are pollution-free electric vehicle, Safe Tempo. For those so inclined, motorcycle rental shops can be found around Thamel and NewRoad. One of the best way to get around Kathmandu is on a bicycle. There are plenty of bicycle rental shops all around Kathmandu. Cycle-rickshaws are another mode of transportation in Kathmandu. Rickshaws have no fixed fares and can vary widely depending on the distance, time of day and the driver. The most comfortable alternative are the tourist coaches but their services are limited to only a few routes.

3.4 ACCOMMODATION IN KATHMANDU

Accommodation plays an active role in the tourist movement. Without the facilities of accommodation no tourism is possible. Accommodation can itself be an important tourist destination. There is no dearth of comfortable accommodation in Kathmandu as there are more than a hundred hotels and lodges in and around Kathmandu for all kinds of budgets. A wide variety of accommodation such as hotels, motels, lodges, guest houses, apartments, rented houses, paying guest house, local house, tea house, tents, inns, resorts, etc. are available in Kathmandu. Thamel today is an agglomeration of hotels, restaurants, pubs and souvenir shops.

Hotels in Kathmandu:

The statistics of hotels in Kathmandu is given in Table I.

Categories	Hotel Count	Room Count	Average Single Room Rate
5 Star	7	1334	US \$ 143.57
4 Star	9	819	US \$ 105.55
3 Star	12	686	US \$ 55.00
2 Star	23	834	US \$ 27.08
1 Star	20	581	US \$ 15.05
Non-star	81	1334	US \$ 20.16

The top hotels of Kathmandu are : Soaltee Crowne Plaza, Hotel de L'Annapurna, Hotel Yak & Yeti, Hotel Everest, Radisson Hotel, Hyatt Regency, Hotel Sherpa, Hotel Ambassador, Shangri-La Hotel, Hotel Himalaya, Summit Hotel, Dwarika Hotel, Hotel Vajra, Nirvana Garden Hotel, Malla Hotel, Woodland, Utse, Shankar Hotel, The Retreat, Hotel Singi, MarcoPolo Business Hotel, Gazabko Business Court, Kathmandu Guest House etc.

Dining and Eating Places in Kathmandu:

It has often been said that Kathmandu is the cuisine capital of this part of the world. Therefore eating out in Kathmandu is a delight. You will be surprised at what you can get to eat around Kathmandu. Of the popular cuisines around the world, you name it and most are available here: Continental, Russian, Italian, Mexican, Thai, Chinese, Japanese, Tibetan, Indian, Nepali and Newari. A wide varieties of restaurants and eating places are available in Kathmandu. Some of the top restaurants are Nanglo, The Bakery Cafe, Rum Doodle, Bhojan Griha, Blanchha Ghar, Cafe Mitra, The Northfield Cafe, Tien Shan, Tian Rui, China Town, Old Vienna Inn, The Chimney, Tansen, Ghar E Kabab, Vaishali, Al Fresco, Tamura, Him-Thai, Chez Caroline, Biwon, Delicias Gourmet, Dhokaima, Nepali Chulo, LaSoon, Cross Kitchen, Latin Quarter, Baithak, The Mike's Breakfast, Wunjula, The Delicatessen, Wimpys, Oriental Kitchen etc.

MAP 2: Map of Kathmandu Valley



Contributions and Impacts of Tourism

Nepal, the mystical Himalayan mountain kingdom has held a very powerful appeal as a tourist destination. Tourism in Nepal plays an important role in the economy of the country. It has been identified as an important source of foreign exchange earning, as an industry creating employment opportunities generating economic growth of the country, development of trade, socio-cultural development, regional development and international understanding. On the other hand, Tourism has exerted new pressures on scarce resources, particularly forests, thus affecting wildlife habitats and pollution. Local culture is fast disappearing with days and demonstration of foreign culture is dominating rather than local ones.

4.1 CONTRIBUTION OF TOURISM

Tourism in Nepal contributes 3.5% to GDP and 15% of total foreign exchange earnings of the country. It also gave direct or indirect employment to 257,000 people in 1998. The average length of stay was 10.8 days and average expenditure/tourist/day was US\$44.2 in 1998.

To establish tourism and culture sector as one of the important sectors of the national economy, the Ninth Plan had targeted the development of forward and backward linkages, and conservation of existing and proposed World Heritage Sites and their promotion as tourist destinations. Similarly, it had targeted to tie up conservation of the national heritages to income earning opportunities and their institutionalization through community management. Effective marketing of Nepal in the international arena to establish it into a major tourist destination, development of traditional arts into an industry to create new employment opportunities, increase in income and foreign currency earning, and to channel the benefits accrued from the tourism sector to the rural areas were the major targets of the Ninth Plan. Against the target of 10 percent growth in tourist arrivals and 20 percent growth in foreign currency earning during the plan period, the achievement has been as follows:

TABLE 2: Tourist Arrival 1997 Vs 2001

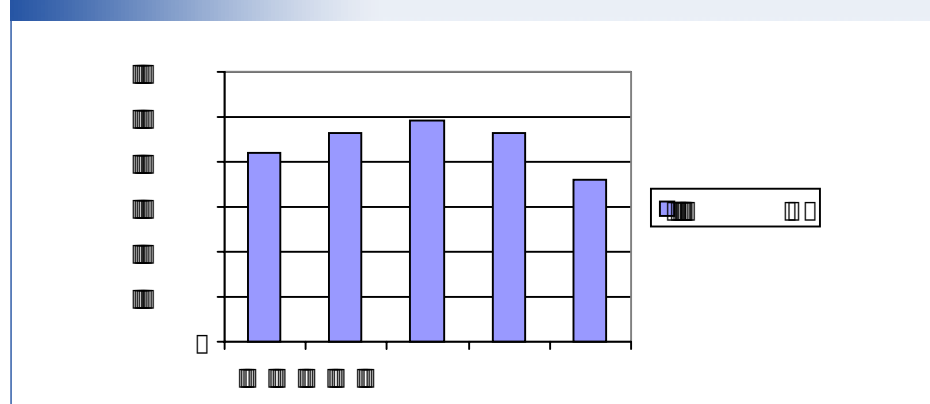
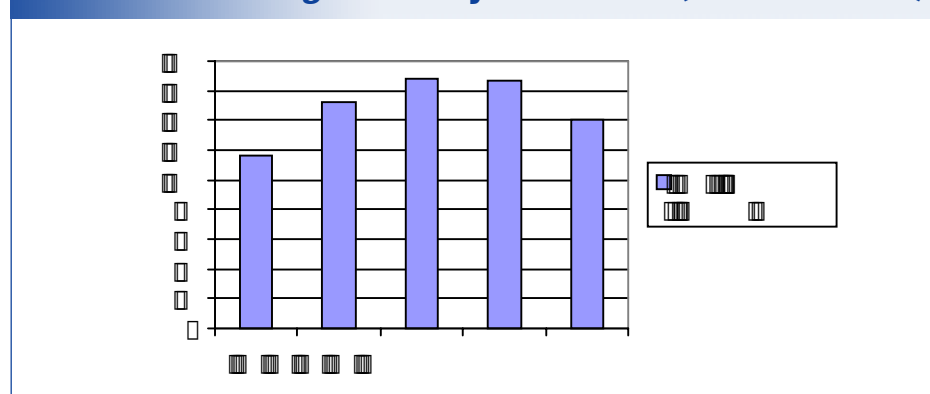
Year	Target	Achievement	Achievement in %	
			Compared to Target	Compared to previous year
1997	420,000	421,857	101.4	7.2
1998	462,000	463,684	101.4	9.9
1999	508,200	491,504	96.7	6.0
2000	559,020	463,646	82.9	-5.7
2001	614,922	361,237	58.74	-22.1
Total	2,564,142	2,201,928	85.9	

Source: The Tenth Plan, Nepal Planning Commission, HMG/Nepal

TABLE 3: Foreign Currency Generation (US \$ in million)

Year	Target	Achievement	Achievement in %	
			Compared to Target	Compared to previous year
1997	213	115.9	54.4	-0.6
1998	255.6	152.5	59.7	31.6
1999	306.7	168.1	54.8	10.2
2000	368.1	166.8	45.3	-0.7
2001	441.6	140.2	31.74	-15.9
Total	1585	745.3	47.0	

Source: The Tenth Plan, Nepal Planning Commission, HMG/Nepal

FIGURE 1: Tourist Arrival 1997 Vs 2001**FIGURE 2: Foreign Currency Generation (US \$ in million)**

The average day of tourist stay in Nepal, during the Ninth Plan period, was targeted at 13 days, however, in the first three years of the plan period the figure was 10.49, 10.76 and 12.28 days respectively. The average stay-day declined to 11.88 and 11.93 respectively. During the last two years of the plan period. Likewise, per day income from a tourist was expected to be US\$ 60; however, in 2001 the figure was only US\$ 39.6. Similarly, in 2002/03, the Ninth Plan targeted to provide direct employment to 111,329. The achievement, at the end of 2001, however, is only 80,000 employments. Contribution of this sector in the total foreign currency earnings and Gross Domestic Product has been 12 percent and 3.1 percent respectively.

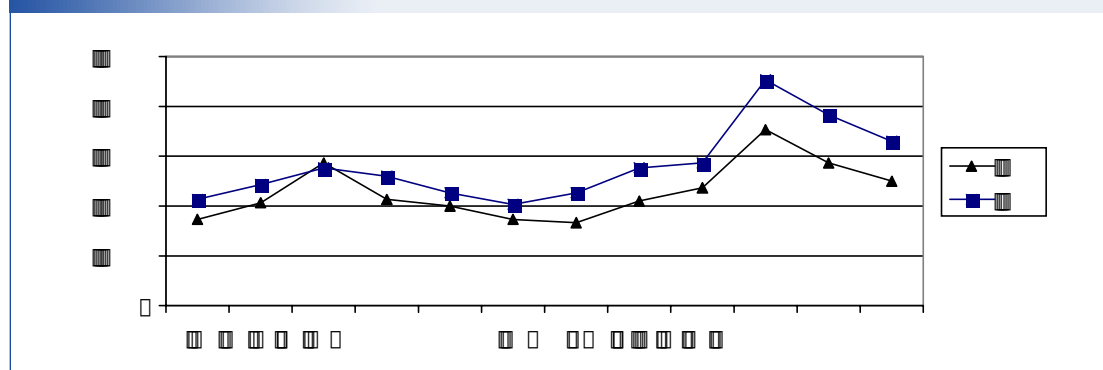
The total tourist arrival during 2002 was 275,469 and it was 338,132 during 2003. The number of tourists visiting Nepal, from mid-December 2001 to mid-December 2002 declined by 23.7 percent. The number of tourists visiting Nepal from mid-December 2002 to mid-December 2003, however, increased by 21.5 percent. Average duration of stay per tourist has also increased from 7.92 to 9.5 days during the review period. 18 In terms of purpose of visit, most tourists came for recreation, trekking and mountaineering. In period of mid-December 2002 and mid-December 2003, 40.0 percent of the tourist arrival was for recreation, 21.5 percent for trekking and mountaineering, 6.2 percent for trade, 6.5 percent for official visit, 4.5 percent for pilgrimage and 21.3 percent for miscellaneous purposes.

TABLE 4: Tourist Arrivals by Months 2002 Vs 2003

Month	2002	2003	% change
January	17176	21215	23.5
February	20668	24349	17.8
March	28815	27737	-3.9
April	21253	25851	21.6
May	19887	22704	14.2
June	17218	20351	18.2
July	16621	22661	36.3
August	21093	27568	30.7
September	23752	28724	20.9
October	35272	45459	28.9
November	28723	38398	33.7
December	24990	33115	32.5
Total	275468	338132	22.4

Source: Immigration Office, TIA

FIGURE 3: Tourist Arrivals by Months 2002 Vs 2003



In terms of origin, it is estimated that 31.9 percent came from Western Europe, 7.7 percent from North America, 3.1 percent from Australia and the Pacific, 1.9 percent from Eastern Europe, 1.0 percent from Central and South America, and 0.4 percent from Africa during the period between mid-December 2002 and mid-December 2003. Tourists from Asia shared 54.0 percent including 24.0 percent from India alone.

There are a total of 108 Star category hotels in the Kingdom, 4 of them added during mid-December, 2002 through mid-December 2003. Nonstar hotels totaled 858 including 19 added during this period. Number of beds in the Star-level hotels increased by 2.4 percent and by 1.5 percent in non-star hotels. The total number of beds in the star and non-star level have reached 10,535 beds and 27,735 beds respectively. There was 2.4 percent increase in the number of hotels and the number of beds increased by 1.7 percent during the review period.

The year 2004 has been a year with ups and downs for Nepal. The first eight months of 2004 showed a continuous growth in visitors' arriving to Nepal. The first quarter in particular grew by 50% whereas the second quarter went up by 25%. Nevertheless, visitors arriving to Nepal by air in 2004 reached a total figure of 288,356, showing an increase by 9% compared to last year, 2003. Year 2005 is expected to perform easy double-digit growth in the light of increasing travellers confidence to Nepal and increasing air links and subsequently bolstered promotional effort in the major tourism generating countries with special regional tourism promotion campaigns.

4.2 IMPACTS OF TOURISM

Tourism has been regarded as a smokeless industry and the most fruitful industry in the world. No coin has a single face. Tourism has both positive and negative impacts. "Tourism is a goose that lays golden eggs, but it can also foul its nest." (Gurung and DeCoursey 1994), a phrase widely used to explain the present state of tourism in Nepal. "The Himalaya are the highest rubbish dumping sites on the earth," "Trekking is wrecking," and "Good-bye to Shangri-La," are some of the examples of catchy headlines that have appeared in national and international media which have linked tourism to pollution and deforestation problems in Kathmandu and Pokhara valleys, the Everest, Langtang, Chitwan and Annapurna regions. Tourism is the largest industry in the world and is of economic importance to developing countries in providing employment opportunities, increased quality of life, education opportunities, improvements in infrastructure and promote development and economic growth (Khan 1997:989). However, in recent years, tourism's contribution to environmental the improvement of living conditions, employment generation for less educated and less-skilled people, has been recognized. The positive and negative aspects of tourism is given below:

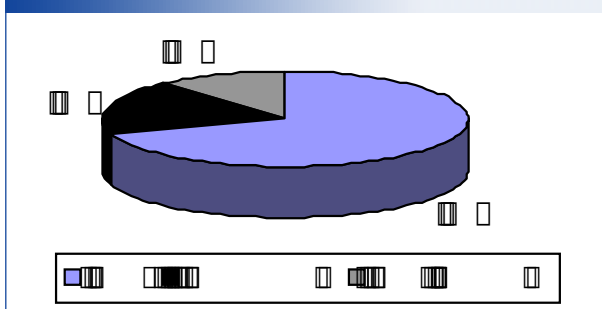
Positive Impacts:

Economy: The role of tourism as an important source of foreign exchange has been well established the world over. "Tourism has reshaped the economy of some of the countries like Japan, Hong Kong, Spain, Italy, Mauritius, Yugoslavia, France and so on" (Negi, 1990: 80). "Newly

emerging countries in such areas as the Caribbean depend heavily on tourists income, which often represents the major part of the gross domestic product (GDP). Even developed nations like Canada, which derived over 11% of its gross domestic product from international visitors in the year 1989 rely heavily on the income from tourism” (Bhatia, 1994: 448-449). Earnings from tourism in Nepal, in terms of Convertible Foreign Exchange as well as in Nepalese Rupees has increased tremendously. Compared to FY2001/02, foreign exchange earnings from the tourism sector in FY2002/03 increased by 35.7 percent totaling Rs 11.75 billion. This sector earned about Rs. 7.17 billion in the first 6 months of FY2003/04. In terms of foreign exchange earned from the commodity export, earnings of this sector in the said period of FY2003/04 accounts to 27.3 percent. Its ratio to total earnings from commodity export and services combined is 18.0 percent. In the total foreign exchange earnings, its share is 9.1 percent. All the three ratios were in the higher side compared to those of FY2001/02.

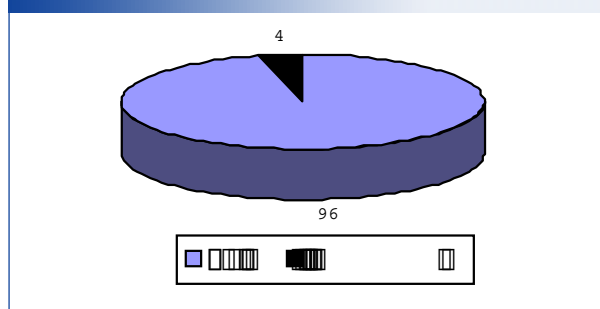
Employment: The travel and tourist industry is labour intensive service industry and provides a lot of employment to the people of different levels. “Tourism as a source of employment is particularly important for areas with no alternative sources of employment, as is often in case in non-industrial areas deficient in natural resources other than scenic attractions and climate” (Medik, 1972: 18). Tourism provides employment to a large number of people directly as well as indirectly and it creates a wide range of jobs which extends from the unskilled to the highly specialised. With the rise in tourism, employment level has risen. Experience tells that one hotel bed means employment for one additional person. “The National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) of India had estimated that in 1975 about 9,33,000 persons were employed in tourism industry in India.” (Bhatia, 1993:300). “It has been estimated that about 7% of the working force is employed in tourism in Britain” (Negi, 1990: 77). According to the International Hotels Association 11,194,418 people are employed in Hotel business only in the world, in 1994 (WTO, 1996: 13). In Nepal, also, tourism is proving to be a major generator of employment opportunities. As an employment provider, the role of tourism sector in Nepal is much more significant. According to a survey conducted by Nepal Rastra Bank (1989: 202-242) 8438 people were directly employed in the tourism sector in the fiscal year 1986/87, including 70.10% in Hotels followed by travel agencies (18.3%) and trekking agencies (11.6%). Among the total number of employees, 8309 were Nepalese and the rest 129 were foreigners. In the same way the number of indirect employment was 2852, in the year 1986/87.

FIGURE 4: Direct Employment in Tourism Sector 1986-87



Source: Nepal Rastra Bank (1989) "Income and Employment Generation from Tourism in Nepal"

FIGURE 5: Indirect Employment in Tourism Sector 1986-87



Source: Nepal Rastra Bank (1989) "Income and Employment Generation from Tourism in Nepal"

Besides, a number of young people are getting employment in mountaineering expedition jobs also. “It is estimated that about 1,40,000 people are getting employment in different sectors of tourism i.e., Hotels, Airlines, Travel Agencies, Trekking Agencies, Mountaineering etc. in Nepal.” (Aajako Samacharpatra 2053.12.21). It clearly shows the role of tourism in generating more employment in Nepal where alternative opportunities are relatively limited.

Development of trade: Another significant benefit from the travel and tourism industry to the national economy is that it provides impetus to the development of trade. Development of tourism creates demand for different goods and services which will help to promote domestic as well as international trade. Tourism promotes sales of handicrafts, curios, souvenir, textiles, carpets and other products. “According to the study, made in Europe, it is estimated that tourists reserve about 33% of their money for on the spot purchases of national products (Negi, 1990: 86). On the other hand, the goods sold to the tourists is also a part of export trade and the seller does not have to pay for transportation and insurance. Tourist in Nepal are found to purchase mainly handicraft items including carpets and have made these items popular in the international arena. The export of carpet has increased significantly from Rs. 7.9 million in 1974/75 to 8875.5 million in 1996/97, recording the highest level of export amounting to Rs. 9594.2 million in the year 1992/93. Similarly the export of handicraft also has increased from Rs. 17.5 million in 1974/75 to Rs. 129.0 million in 1996/97. In terms of percentage share, the share of carpet and handicrafts to total export trade of Nepal, contributes more than 50% since the year 1987/88, recording the highest share of 65.5% in 1990/91. Thus, tourism industry has generated significant indirect benefits through the growth of industrial sector and export trade.

Socio-cultural development: The benefit of tourism cannot be evaluated in terms of economic benefit only, but it has non-economic or social benefits also like socio-cultural, educational, political significance as well. Tourism has helped people to be conscious about our culture thus, reviving the centuries old culture. We are able to spread our culture far and wide through exchange. It also aids and motivates the preservation cultural heritage. Society has benefited from tourism in many ways. It has helped increase the education level in the valley. Social status is increasing along with the tourism. Flow of information is helping us to leave malpractices and take good ones. Revival of culture, consciousness for environment has increased.

Technology: with the increase in tourism, Kathmandu has been adopting the new technologies that arrives with the tourists, helping the valley to stay in touch with the technical demand and development of the world.

Infrastructure development: Development and improvement of infrastructure is another important benefit. The benefits from infrastructure investments, justified primarily for tourism - airports, roads, water supply and other public utilities – may be widely shared by the other sectors of the economy. In addition to development of new infrastructure, the improvements in the existing infrastructure which are undertaken in order to attract tourists is also crucial importance. These improvements may confer benefits upon the resident population by providing them with amenities which, hitherto, they had enjoyed.

Regional development: Tourism is also an instrument in developing economically backward regions of a country. Tourist expenditure is of special significance in marginal areas, which are relatively isolated, economically underdeveloped, and have unemployment problems. In Nepal, many destinations lacking behind in development and transportation facilities like Annapurna areas, Namche, Lukla, Langtang etc. have become economically better off through tourism. Remote and rather inaccessible areas like Kanchanjunga, Makalu-Barun, Upper Gorkha, Dolpa, Jumla and such other places could be developed from tourism point of view.

International Understanding: Tourism can be a vehicle for international understanding and keeping peace in the world by way of bringing diverse people face to face. It has been cited as a major contributor to international goodwill and as a prime means of developing social and cultural understanding among all peoples of the world. People belonging to different countries, practising different lifestyles and speaking different languages, come together to make friends. Tourism has greatly enriched and promoted friendship and goodwill.

Negative Impacts:

Tourism has created new demands for goods and services, and this has exerted new pressures on scarce resources, particularly forests, thus affecting wildlife habitats and pollution. Linked to this, tourism is a symbol of the affluent western life-style and consumerism. The demand of foreign life-styles for market goods is much higher than that of the native population, the majority of whom consist of subsistence agro-pastoralists. The accumulation of plastics, bottles, tin foils, cans and so on along Nepal's trekking routes reflects this. It has been suggested that recreation and tourism activities in mountain environments are surpassing the resource extraction industry as the single largest threat to the conservation of mountain ecosystems (Denniston, 1995). The impacts of trekking include the excessive widening of trails, soil erosion, soil compaction, and the loss of vegetation (Ceballos-Lascuráin, 1996). Despite the often small scale of trekking impacts, they can take on a greater significance in mountain ecosystems because the areas are often unique and contain rare species and are of high aesthetic value (Monz, 2000). Furthermore, the growing orientation of local population towards the western life style and socio-cultural delinquency including increased use of drugs and a growth in criminal activities, have all been linked to a shift from traditional values induced by the advent of tourism, along with other modernization programmes. With the introduction of tourism, valley has seen drastic adoption of foreign culture. Local culture is fast disappearing with days and demonstration of foreign culture is dominating rather than local ones. There has been serious effects on the food and drinks, dress, habits and lifestyles of the people of Kathmandu.

4

CHAPTER

Problems and Suggestions

Nepal, the living historical museum of the world, is one of the important tourist destination in the world. With the possession of numerous attractions the potentiality of tourism is very high in Nepal. However, the potentiality so far does not seem to have been exploited properly. It's true potentiality can be realised only by proper planning and implementation, appropriate marketing, infrastructures development, new product development and conservation of existing products. There should be institutional coordination and involvement of local communities in sustainable tourism development

5.1 PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

Tourism industry in Kathmandu has been affected by the number of reasons. Some of them are:

- *The pace of steady growth has been broken by the uninterrupted disturbances caused by the frequent Bandhs (strikes), demonstrations and the nation-wide imposition of emergency.*
- *Vulnerability of tourism in Nepal due to external factors and international media publicity of internal insurgency. The web sites of embassies of several tourist-generating countries have posted warnings about Maoist insurgency in Nepal. Watching the security condition of Nepal, various countries have issued the travel advisories to their respective nationals not to visit the country which is also posing the major threat.*
- *Terrorism is developing fast in our country. With the war going on with the rebels, security in Nepal is considered low creating the problem for industry. The hair raising tales of bombing, kidnapping, extortion, murdering etc are fast reaching to the ears of perspective tourists thus leading to cancel their reservations and the number of tourist police allocated is not enough.*
- *Report issued by various international agencies on human right condition and press freedom is posing a threat to the industry as perspective tourists from major countries don't will to place such like this with such conditions.*
- *Lack of proper planning and development of new and existing tourism products, and tourism limited to certain areas of the valley only.*

- *Lack of conservation* and development of required infrastructures.
- Due to *lack of financial resources*, the conservation, preservation and campaigning of living heritage like cultural, historical and memorial sites have been inadequate. Similarly, due to lack of adequate quality upgradation of the heritage sites and violation of standard practice in the renovation works of areas and monuments enlisted in the World Heritage Site, they have reached at endangered level for being de-listed from the World Heritage Site lists.
- Tourism development and its expansion have been challenged by *unmanaged urbanization, environmental degradation and pollution*. Pollution is the major problem of Kathmandu valley. Pollution is to that level that is considered dangerous by the WHO.
- One of the major constraints facing tourist industry in Kathmandu valley was *failure of the municipal government in disposing solid waste* which blamed the central government for having failed to provide it with a dumping site. Such a failure in the peak tourist season could hurt arrival of tourists in the future and act as a potential health hazard to the locals.
- There is an absence of analysis and estimation of the portion of the revenue generated from the tourism sector that stays inside the country, status of the development of the cost-based quality tourism, direct and indirect employment, use of established infrastructure, and necessity of investment.
- Availability of air seats have been constrained due to the termination of Europe sector flights by Royal Nepal Airlines and reduction in the number of scheduled flight by international airlines and the failure of the Nepal's private sector airlines to operate international flights.
- *Lack of Involvement of local communities* in managing the heritage sites and making such management self-reliant.
- *Lack of co-ordination in programs and actions* between private sector and government and within the private sector despite the establishment of Nepal Tourism Board.
- *Lack of appropriate marketing strategy* have resulted in limited growth. Kathmandu is not positioned properly. Nepal had done very little in identifying target market.
- Tourism industry is largely affected by the *political instability* and recent declaration of state of emergency.
- *Lack of proper information system* has also constrained tourism development.

5.2 STRATEGIES FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN KATHMANDU

Development of the tourism sector assists the overall development of the national economy and generates foreign currency; it also helps in the economic development of the hilly region that has low agricultural productivity and creates employment in the region. The quality of civil aviation is equally important when considering the development of the tourism sector. Similarly, culture is the treasure of the country and its development and conservation will promote the fame and identity of the country; at the same time, it also helps in the overall social development of the country and the development of the tourism sector. Some of the suggestions for sustainable tourism development in Kathmandu are given below:

- **Proper Tourism Planning and Implementation:** Careful planning and implementation is required in order to achieve overall objectives of the tourism development. There should be comprehensive planning regarding tourist infrastructure, management of tourist attractions and facilities and accommodation and transport services, marketing and promotion, upgrading and improving a destination's attractiveness. Institutional coordination and community involvement in the entire process of tourism planning and development is crucial.

- **Product Development:** Visitors want to experience new things. New products and packages should be identified and developed. There are various unexploited places in Kathmandu which could be developed as new products. Local communities should be involved in identifying new products. Similarly the existing products should be upgraded, improved and conserved. The monuments in perils should be renovated as fast as possible before they vanish in the mud. Proper planning should be done for the conservation and preservation of historical, cultural, religious and archaeological heritages and enhancing their practical utilization. The new destinations can be promoted as village tourism, pilgrimage tourism, sports tourism, adventure tourism etc.

- **Infrastructure Development and Improving Service and Quality:** Improvement in facilities and services to visitors is needed. Uncertainty of air seat capacity, especially of Royal Nepal Airlines (RNAC), is the major constraint for tourism development. RNAC should increase its air seat capacity and private airlines should be allowed to operate immediately even in those routes where RNAC operates. Besides, RNAC should make its flights regular and reliable. The airport and airlines service with necessary infrastructure should be developed to ensure domestic and international travel. Private sector should be involved in airport construction, operation and long-distance airlines service. The government should give due attention in to developing and improving road transportation.

- **Environmental Protection:** One of the main problems faced by Nepalese tourism is the deteriorating conditions of the environment. To implement priority programs such as environmental protection, garbage management, alternative energy, employment generation and awareness raising activities, coordination among the governmental, non-governmental and private sector should be enhanced. Special monitoring should be done to check pollution in protected areas like trekking, mountaineering and other environment-sensitive areas. For this, solid waste situation in Kathmandu must be improved. Pollution should be controlled by enforcing standards to vehicles, industries and other sources of pollution at the valley level in Kathmandu. Environment awareness should be created by making people aware of the effects of tourism. Providing tourists with information on scarcity of natural resources can also do this. Similarly Environmental Graphic Designing (EGD) should be done with a professional Nepali look.

- **Institutional Co-ordination and Regulation:** As tourism industry is fragmented with many players, problems have arisen because of conflicting interests. There should be

adequate co-ordination in programs and actions between private sector and government. Everyone should take responsibility for achieving sustainable development. Local bodies' involvement should be emphasized in developing new tourist spots. Under the initiative of the NTB, and the participation of the private sector, publicity and promotion works should be done. To make the tourist's travel safe and well-managed, various government recognized agencies like travel and trekking should be encouraged to coordinate travel programmes.

- **Human Resource Development:** Efficient and professional management is an obvious prerequisite of successful tourism development. In planning for human resources development, programmes should be established to screen and train prospective employees so that they could acquire both attitudinal as well as technical skills. In order to increase quality and standard in tourism service, tourism manpower training programs should be conducted regularly. Private sectors should also be mobilized to carry out the training activities in an integrated manner. Higher educational institution and regional mountaineering academy should be established in tourism sector to improve tourism education. Local manpower should be encouraged to be involved in the tourism industry and business to the extend possible.

- **Protection, Promotion and Management of Cultural, Religious, Archaeological, and Natural Heritages:** Positive attitude of people towards cultured tourism should be promoted to support tourism service.. Archaeological survey, exploration, protection, and excavation of the areas of national importance should be carried out. Cultural uniqueness and religious tradition that supports tourism sector should be protected and conserved. There should be mandatory implementation of guidelines for the protection of the areas under world heritage and of archaeological importance. There should be active participation of the local, non-governmental and private sector in the protection and promotion of the heritages to make such activities self-reliant and income generating. For the Study, protection and promotion of literature, arts and culture, there should be legal protection and recognition of works of various literatures, writers, musicians, artists etc and encouragement to new talents.

- **Empowerment of Local Communities:** Tourism should be initiated with the help of broad based community input. Community-based participation is key to sustainable tourism development Local people need to be informed and consulted on key issues at all stages in their development and involved in decision-making about project design and implementation. This leads to greater efficiency, effectiveness, self-reliance, coverage, sustainability and equity. It provides opportunities for local people to become educated about the purpose and benefits of the development, increasing their support. Work actively with indigenous leaders, women and minority groups to insure that indigenous cultures and communities are depicted accurately and with respect. Strengthen, nurture and encourage the community's ability to maintain and use traditional skills. Education and training programs to improve and manage heritage and natural resources should be established. Financial incentives for local businesses should be provided to enter tourism.

- **Improve Information and Communication System:** Technology is becoming embedded in all sorts of products and services. Different information technologies have now offered many opportunities for improving the delivery of different services. In tourism, what is being sold and distributed is primarily information about various facilities to be used. Internet has brought a big change in the methods of sales and marketing of different tourism products, reservation systems in airlines, hotels etc. Therefore, for the tourism development, new technologies like on-line reservation systems in hotels, airlines and travel agencies, touch-screen information kiosks, interactive TV's virtual tour etc. should be developed and promoted. Newer techniques of data processing, transmission of data and telecommunication such as satellite television, cable television networks, videotext, internet should be developed to accelerate tourism.

- **Promoting Eco-tourism:** The keys to making tourism manageable and beneficial to local communities, while linking it to the overall social and environmental development of the region, include: providing training opportunities; promoting alternative energy sources and fuel efficient devices; Charging entry fees to international trekkers; etc. Bio-diversity conservation and proper waste management systems should be developed. A natural and cultural museum should be built to promote local culture and tradition simultaneously training the local people in order to produce local arts and crafts so that non-lodge owners can also benefit from tourism. Basic infrastructure such as drinking water, trails and bridges, schools and health care systems and camping facilities will be improved so that it will not only benefit tourists but also local people. Most importantly emphasis should be given. Emphasis should placed on developing a grassroots approach to sustainable tourism programmes, which can assist in environmental protection while addressing the local need for social, cultural and economic development through the careful selection of programmes, people's participation, institutionalization of local bodies, and more importantly, by sensitizing the local people.

- **Marketing and Promotion:** Tourism being a high publicity product and a highly competitive industry, it should be marketed properly. The true potentialities of Kathmandu can be realised only by proper marketing strategies. Overall, word of mouth and personal recommendations from friends are the main sources of information. We must continue to promote such visitors. Tourism marketing should be done jointly by the government and the private sector to promote destination, promote products and to counter poor or bad publicity abroad. Publicity should be made at international level through different popular international travel trade magazines, journals, and various other media in major originating markets. Target markets and segments should be identified on the basis of continuous market analysis. Destination Kathmandu should be branded and strongly positioned in the international market. There is a need to create and consistently apply a branded approach to destination marketing. Destination marketing website needs to developed. Prioritisation should be made on the basis of our product strength, market trend and need and strategies of other competitors. Pricing of tourism products also needs proper study and analysis. Also, promotional packages. Proper budgeting and resource allocation and continuous monitoring and feedback are also necessary to realise defined targets.

5.3 FUTURE OF KATHMANDU CITY

Every moment is a new experience in Kathmandu. The city has something to offer for everyone and has held a very powerful appeal as a tourist destination. Kathmandu can offer an abundance of products which will attract both general and special interest holiday-makers. Even more powerfully, once people have visited Kathmandu, a high percentage of these visitors wish to return again and again. At present Kathmandu's image as a holiday destination is under pressure due to violence and political unrest and from competition due to better resourced marketing of other destinations. Influencing the image of Kathmandu through more effective marketing is therefore critical. Kathmandu possess a number of unique selling proposition. It must be distinguished from other exotic destinations in order to stand out on a very competitive market place. Therefore, the consistent use of brand and marketing message is necessary. By concentrating on Kathmandu's inherent product strengths, unique culture, climate, history, natural environment and friendly peoples, the city should be repositioned as a varied and multifaceted destination, with world class cultural tourism and special interest tourism products, in addition to pilgrimage, meetings, incentives, conventions and events (MICE), business and sports tourism.

For the future development of Kathmandu as "must see" destination, the diverse products of Kathmandu should be clustered and separate marketing strategy should be developed for each cluster. The varied products of Kathmandu can be clustered into (i) Culture, traditions and people cluster, (ii) Cities and leisure cluster, (iii) Outdoors and adventure cluster, (iv) Religion and pilgrimage cluster and (v) nature and wildlife cluster. And Special interest marketing should be introduced targeting meetings, conventions, incentives and events, niche products and sports tourism. Therefore, for the sustained tourism development in Kathmandu, there is a need to expand marketing activities, expand the menu of potential destinations, upgrade and develop the existing products, improve infrastructures, and overall institutional coordination and empowerment of local communities is essential.

5

CHAPTER

Recommendations and Conclusions

Kathmandu should be positioned as a varied and multi-faceted destination, by concentrating on its inherent product strengths, unique culture, traditions, climate, history, natural environment and friendly peoples. A significant increase in marketing effort is needed to promote Kathmandu as one of the world's leading "must see" destination and increase its economic contribution to the economy. A strong Kathmandu tourism brand needs to be developed and consistent use of message, slogans and brand is necessary.

6.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

Since tourism is a rapidly growing phenomenon worldwide, the tourism industry has become a powerful engine for economic development and a major foreign exchange generator. In today's globalised marketplace, strategic planning are becoming key elements of tourism policy. In this fourth stage destinations must think strategically; policy must be designed to position the destination to attract identified markets, create value through innovation, encourage partnerships between stakeholders and coordinate actions and initiatives. The new age of tourism needs five areas of tourism planning: (a) Tourism Product and Supply Factor, (b) Environment Factor, (c) Human Resource Development, (d) Competitiveness, Quality and Efficiency, and (e) Marketing, Information and Communication Strategy. Strategic management and planning needs to be applied. It includes environmental scanning (both external and internal), strategy formulation (strategic or long-range planning), strategy implementation, and evaluation and control. The strategic management emphasizes the monitoring and evaluating of external opportunities and threats in the light of a corporation's strengths and weaknesses. For the sustained development of tourism industry in Kathmandu, following recommendations are given on the basis of this study:

(a) Tourism Products and Supply Factor: We should focus on the quantitative expansion of the tourism industry through the development as well as management of potential tourism resources in a manner that generates the extreme benefits; Standardisation of tourism products is needed in order to attract quality tourists. Visitors want to experience new

things and new products. New products/ packages should be explored and developed. Existing products should be upgraded. The government should give significant emphasis to approach more international airlines to come to Nepal or fly via Nepal. An alternative international airport should be developed in the Terai region at a location which will be technically and economically sound and viable from market perspectives. Improvement in facilities and services to visitors at TIA is needed. The government should give due attention to developing and improving road transportation. For access to new areas, roads should be constructed in strategic ways, regular maintenance of roads is also necessary at least in the tourist frequented areas. A proportion of tourism revenue may be allocated for this purpose. There is a significant need to improve the process and service of immigration and customs in Nepal and the government must extend immediate attention to improve the situation. We should focus on setting up preventive measures and assistance facilities for the safety, security and sanitation to tourists. The measures should cover the accessibility of tourists to countries' diplomatic and consular representatives as well as repatriation of tourists. Safety, security and sanitation are the key factors for the tourists to make a decision to travel or not to travel to any destination.

(b) Environment Factor: We need to focus on environment issues especially pollution in Kathmandu Valley, major trekking routes and touristic places. Solid waste situation in Kathmandu must be improved. Pollution should be controlled by enforcing standards to vehicles, industries and other sources of pollution at the valley level in Kathmandu. Necessary attention is required to maintain hygiene standard in the country. Adequate monitoring should be done to ensure adherence to appropriate hygiene standards in the areas of food and drinks, drinking water etc. We need to develop as well as promote sustainable tourism with the least environmental, natural, social and cultural impact, so as to preserve the existing national resources for the benefits of later generations. We should give emphasis to the empowerment of local administration organization in managing tourism products, such as environmental protection, reducing adverse social impacts, and conservation of the cultural heritage of people in their areas. Similarly *Environmental Graphic Designing (EGD)* should be done with a professional Nepali look. There should be consistent use of colors, signs, logo, typography, designs for the arrows, signs, maps, traffic signs, dustbins, boards etc. in every corner of the city with a Nepali touch. The shops, houses, hotels, traffic islands, offices should also be designed consistently to make the city look clean and attractive.

(c) Human Resource Development: Human resources development is especially important in tourism because service activity depending in large part for its success on the quality of personnel working in tourism. Persons working in the many aspects of tourism must be properly trained. The general public and people living in tourism areas must be educated about tourism. Even the tourists themselves must be informed about their destination- its geography, history, cultural patterns and society- and encouraged to respect it. Tourism education and training institutions should play the catalyst and coordinating roles with all stakeholders in each region or destinations.

(d) Competitiveness, Quality and Efficiency: Tourism policy and planning need strategic thinking by differentiated tourism products and to compete with the other regions by improving the quality of tourism products and the efficiency of the tourism operation. In terms of the diversity in cultures, economy, and natural resources of the nations in the Asian region, we must take advantages of these diversities to create the complementary advantages across the region. This leads to position its tourism destination according to its diversity of each nation. In terms of competition among nations in the region, each nation has to compete in the light of competitive differentiation, service quality, and productivity. It is clear that to compete and survive in the current global environment, we must understand the rules and scope of competition, the competitors involved. To improve the competitiveness of Kathmandu tourism industry, we have to identify specific target market we want to serve and to create more value added product and service to satisfy our customers. Market segmentation, target market and product positioning; quality and efficiency; and human resources development are the key strategies for the competition within the Asian region.

(e) Marketing, Information and Communication Strategy: We should use Kathmandu's uniqueness as the country's selling point while establishing a brand image for each region and push them to be developed accordingly; The products should be presented from different points of view in order to meet the tourists' demands. Many holidaymakers are already accustomed to arranging their trips online. 727 million of people worldwide have access to internet and are increasingly using this medium for booking travel. Therefore, more and more destinations' website needs to be developed and internet marketing should be done efficiently. information should be provided to tourists before and after they arrive at their destinations. Various types of information should be available - the general geographical, historical and cultural background of the area; the attractions facilities and services (and their costs) that are available; transportation schedules; location of shopping, medical and postal facilities, consulates, embassies and religious institutions; and other specific information. The press, and particularly the specialized travel press and other media, including modern means of electronic communication, should issue honest and balanced information on events and situations that could influence the flow of tourists; they should also provide accurate and reliable information to the consumers of tourism services; the new communication and electronic commerce technologies should also be developed and used for this purpose. Marketing and tourist information units should be established in this organization too. Emphasis should be given for the development of an integrated management of information, public relations and customer relations through the use of information technology.

6.3 CONCLUSIONS

Every moment is a new experience in Kathmandu. Kathmandu possess a number of tourism attractions for both general and speical interest tourist. However, Kathmandu has not been able to manage and market tourism on a sound and professional basis. Lack of institutional co-ordination among the government and the private sector is well pronounced. One of the major problems to tourism like growing environmental problems and poor preservation and development of touristic resources have not been addressed. Unless Nepal addresses these issues, sustained development of tourism will not be possible. Tourism is a highly competitive industry and every country is trying to develop it. So, Nepal must overcome its problems on a systematic and time bound basis and develop industry on professional lines. Some sections of the industry has started to professionalise by initiating links with international chains or providing management contracts or hiring qualified experts from international arena. These are noteworthy but not adequate. The study has clearly shown the paucity of marketing efforts of Nepal. In this respect Nepal must make efforts to market Nepal's advantages and differentiate it among other tourism spots as per the needs and potentials of the market. Nepal can be the "*Tourism Capital of Asia*" if it's tourism products are managed properly and strategic planning should be done for the sustained tourism development. Strategic policy must be designed to position the destination to attract identified markets, create value through innovation, encourage partnerships between stakeholders and coordinate actions and initiatives. To promote Kathmandu as "Must see" destination, there should be proper tourism planning and management regarding Tourism product and supply factor, Environment factor, Human Resource Development, Competitiveness, Quality and Efficiency, and Marketing, Information and Communication Strategy. Tourism policy and planning need strategic thinking by differentiated tourism products and to compete with the other regions by improving the quality of tourism products and the efficiency of the tourism operation. In today's competitive world, tourism in Kathmandu cannot be developed unless aggressive marketing and promotion is done with the assurance of safety and security. The image of Kathmandu as "the living historical museum of the world" can be sustained only if we could conserve and improve the conditions of our historical temples, monuments, archaeological sites and cultural heritage.

References

- Banskota, K., Sharma, B., Neupane, I. & Gyawali, P. (1995) *A Rapid Assessment of the Quality Tourism Project*. Kathmandu: CREST.
- Bhatia, A.K., (2001) *International Tourism Management*, New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Limited; 2001
- Ee Alwis, R., (1997) *Issues in and prospects for development of tourism in Nepal - An agenda for action*. Kathmandu: UNDP.
- Central Bureau of Statistics, HMG/Nepal (2003), *Statistical Year Book of Nepal, 2003* Kathmandu.
- Department of Tourism, HMG/Nepal (2003). *Nepal Tourism Master Plan*. Kathmandu.
- Department of Tourism, HMG/Nepal (1996) *Nepal: A Visitor's Guide*. Kathmandu.
- Department of Tourism, HMG/Nepal (1996) *Nepal For All Seasons*. Kathmandu.
- Department of Tourism, HMG/Nepal (1962-1998) *Nepal Tourism Statistics (Various Issues)* Kathmandu.
- Department of Tourism, HMG/Nepal (1997) *The Festivals of Nepal*. Kathmandu.
- Dowman, K. and Bubriski, K. (1995) *Power Places of Kathmandu. Hindu and Buddhist Holy Sites in the Sacred Valley of Nepal*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- FNCCI (1996), *Directory of Tourism*, Kathmandu
- HMG/Nepal (1995), *Tourism Policy*, 1995
- HMG/Nepal, Ministry of Finance, *Economic Survey, 2003-4*, Kathmandu
- National Planning Commission, HMG/Nepal *The Ninth Plan* Kathmandu.
- National Planning Commission, HMG/Nepal (2003). *The Tenth Plan (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper) 2002–2007*. Kathmandu.
- Nepal Rastra Bank. (1989). *Income and Employment Generation from Tourism in Nepal*. Kathmandu.
- Nepal, S.K. (1997) *Sustainable Tourism, Protected Areas, and Livelihood Needs of Local Communities in Developing Countries*. International Journal of Sustainable Development & World
- Pradhan, Kamal Maiya (1997) *Planning Tourism in Nepal Vikas*, New Delhi
- Pradhanang, Surendra Bhakta (2000) *Tourists' Consumption Patterns and its Economic Impact in Nepal* Adroit Publishing, Delhi

- Raj, Prakash A. *Criteria for Strategy for Sustainable Development in the Tourism Sector National Strategies for Sustainable Development*. Available from [http: www.nssd.net/country/nepal/nep07/htm](http://www.nssd.net/country/nepal/nep07/htm)
- Satyaj, Yajna Raj, *Tourism in Nepal - A Profile*, North Publishing House, Vanarasi
- Sharma, P. 1995. *A Framework for Tourism Carrying Capacity Analysis*. Discussion Paper Series No. MEI 95/1. Kathmandu: ICIMOD.
- Shrestha, Hari Prasad (2000) *Tourism in Nepal: Marketing Challenges*, Nirala, New Delhi
- Singh, B.R., *Glimpses of Tourism, Airlines and Management in Nepal*, Nirala Publications, New Delhi
- Slusser, Mary. 1982. *Nepal Mandala: A Cultural Study of the Kathmandu Valley*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Travers, Robert, UNDP (2004), *Tourism Marketing Strategy for Nepal 2005-2020*, Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Programme (TRPAP), Kathmandu.
- UNDP (1995) *Partnership for Quality Tourism*. Kathmandu

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Mr. Ammar Raj Guni, born on October 14th 1979 and associated with the guiding profession has been working

from a long years. His inherent interest on tourism promotion specially tour and trekking sector has taken him various destination and taught him priceless lessons in relations to trekking and tour of Nepal.

Mr. Guni, a man with the Buddhism religion interests, has traveled to the various parts of Kathmandu District to write this guide book. Not only the geography of the trekking spots has been made to cover relevant aspect of trekking including notes on significant sightseeing spots, flora and fauna of the areas concerned.

I am of the conviction that the book shall be widely accepted and shall prove extremely useful for all kinds of travelers who seek to discover Kathmandu valley. The guidebook also suggest measures and strategies to boost the tourism in Kathmandu.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Mr. Ananda Kr. Maharjan born on 11th March, 1983, He has BBS degree in Tourism Marketing. He has

keen interest on Tourism promotion, marketing and exploring new destinations. Apart from these, He has been working as a Creative Visualizer in a well-known designing and print production house. Thus he has good layout and pre-press knowledge. And he is wizard at web-page designing and font development. He is also interested in Environmental Graphic Designing.

Born on Kathmandu, he has travelled almost all the parts of Kathmandu and has explored the touristic places that can be promoted as prime destinations.

This guidebook can be helpful to anyone who wish to travel and visit Kathmandu and know its culture, customs and traditions. The guidebook focuses on the tourism attractions, accommodations, accessibility and amenities of Kathmandu city.