

APR-JUN 2026

FRAME

Photo Essays, Features & Visual Narratives

Wildlife

Disappearing Glaciers

Living Traditions

**Stories that Connect
People to Place**



Feature of the Month

The View from My Workplace

CONTENTS

FRAME - A Quarterly Magazine of Photography, Culture, and Conservation from Nepal

4 EDITORIAL

PHOTOWALKS

- 6 Pashupati Photowalk (11-Apr-2026)
- 8 Kirtipur Photowalk (16-May-2026)
- 10 Bouddha Photowalk (20-Jun-2026)
- 12 Call for Submissions

PHOTO STORIES

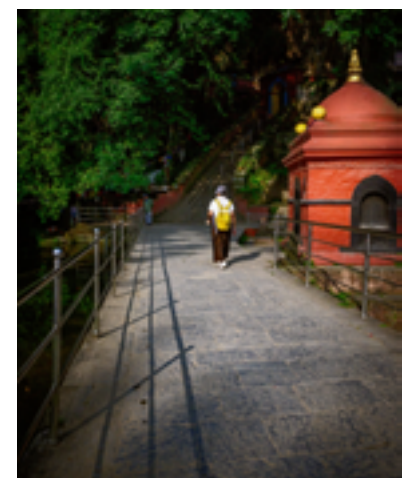
- 14 PhotoWalk Nepal Completes 19 Years
- 18 The View from My Workplace
- 23 The Vanishing Himalayas
- 26 The High Valleys of Manang
- 30 A Haven for Classical Music
- 35 The Ancient Shrine of Shesh Narayan
- 39 Nepal's Living Procession of Rain, Faith and Community
- 42 Where the Sacred Meets the Street

FRAMECRAFT

- 46 Tools, techniques, and ways of seeing

FEATURES

- 52 Snow Leopard Scout's Diary
- 54 Masters of Lens
- 56 Frames of the Month - April 2026
- 58 Frames of the Month - May 2026
- 60 Frames of the Month - June 2026
- 62 Experiencing The Nikon Z5 II
- 64 Xiaomi 17T: The Telephoto Master



Cover Photo By: Santosh Basnet
Indian Peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*) female with her hatchlings, in Rapti river, Meghauli, Chitwan.

EDITORIAL Nineteen years of looking, learning, exploring, and sharing stories through photography.



Last month, PhotoWalk Nepal entered its twentieth year. Looking back on the past nineteen years, I was reminded that photography is about much more than cameras and photographs. It is about the people we meet, the places we discover, and the stories we share along the way.

As photographers, we often begin with what catches the eye: a mountain peak glowing in the morning light, an ancient temple hidden among trees, or a fleeting moment on a distant trail. Yet the longer we practice photography, the more we realize that the camera is not only a tool for recording what we see. It is also a way of looking deeper.

In this second issue of FRAME, our stories take us to places that reveal

themselves gradually. From the ancient shrine of Shesh Narayan to the high valleys of Manang, the photographs in these pages explore landscapes shaped by history, culture, and the people who call them home. Beyond their visual beauty, these places remind us that every photograph has a story to tell.

This issue also celebrates the people behind the images. We are honoured to feature Mr Mani Lama, a pioneer of travel photography in Nepal whose work has inspired generations of photographers to explore the country with curiosity and respect. Through the Snow Leopard Scouts' Diary, we are reminded that photography can also play an important role in conservation, helping us understand and appreciate the fragile ecosystems of the Himalaya.

Photography is constantly evolving. New tools and technologies continue to expand creative possibilities, but the heart of photography remains unchanged. Whether using the latest camera, a smartphone, or a decades-old film camera, what matters most is the ability to observe, connect, and tell meaningful stories.

As always, FRAME is a celebration of that journey and of the community that continues to make it possible. We hope the stories, photographs, and conversations in this issue inspire you to look a little longer, explore a little further, and discover something new through your own lens.

Happy shooting.

Om Prakash Yadav
Editorial Director
Founder: PhotoWalk Nepal

What matters most is the ability to observe, connect, and tell meaningful stories.

PHOTOWALKS

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PASHUPATI PHOTOWALK (11-APR-2026)

Moments of Ritual and Everyday Life

Set along the banks of the Bagmati River, the Pashupatinath Temple area provided a deeply layered setting for our April photowalk; where ritual, devotion, and the rhythm of everyday life unfolded side by side. Participants moved through temple courtyards, riverbanks, shrines, and narrow pathways, capturing sacred ceremonies, architectural details, wandering sadhus, drifting incense smoke, reflections along the water, and fleeting human interactions. Pashupatinath revealed itself not simply as a place of worship, but as a living environment where centuries of faith and daily life continue to coexist naturally.



Pashupatinath Temple Area. Photo: Om Prakash Yadav

The photowalk encouraged participants to slow down and observe how light filtered through temple structures, how expressions changed within moments of prayer and reflection, and how stories emerged through gesture, texture, and movement. For many, the experience became an exercise in patience and awareness; looking beyond obvious scenes to find quieter narratives within the complexity of the surroundings. More than just a photography outing, the Pashupatinath photowalk became a shared experience of observation, conversation, and visual storytelling in one of Kathmandu's most spiritually significant spaces.



Sadhus at a Shrine. Photo: Shushina Maharjan



Sadhu at his seat of meditation. Photo: Kushal Raj Shrestha



Devotee offering prayers at a shrine. Photo: Om Prakash Yadav

During the event, the FRAME Cover Photo Award and certificate was presented to Mr. Ankit Shrestha supported by Xiaomi Nepal.



FRAME Cover Photo Award. Photo: Anshuman Yadav

KIRTIPUR PHOTOWALK (16-MAY-2026)

Old Streets, Living Culture

Perched on a ridge overlooking the Kathmandu Valley, Kirtipur provided a rich setting for our May photowalk. Old brick streets, temple squares, traditional homes, and everyday life came together in layers of history and atmosphere. Beginning from the historic Bagh Bhairab Temple area, participants moved through narrow alleys, courtyards, and open squares, photographing architecture and heritage, and the details that define the character of the town; morning conversations, weathered doorways, children at play, and moments unfolding naturally within the rhythm of local life. Kirtipur revealed itself as a historic settlement, and a living community where culture and daily routines continue to coexist organically.

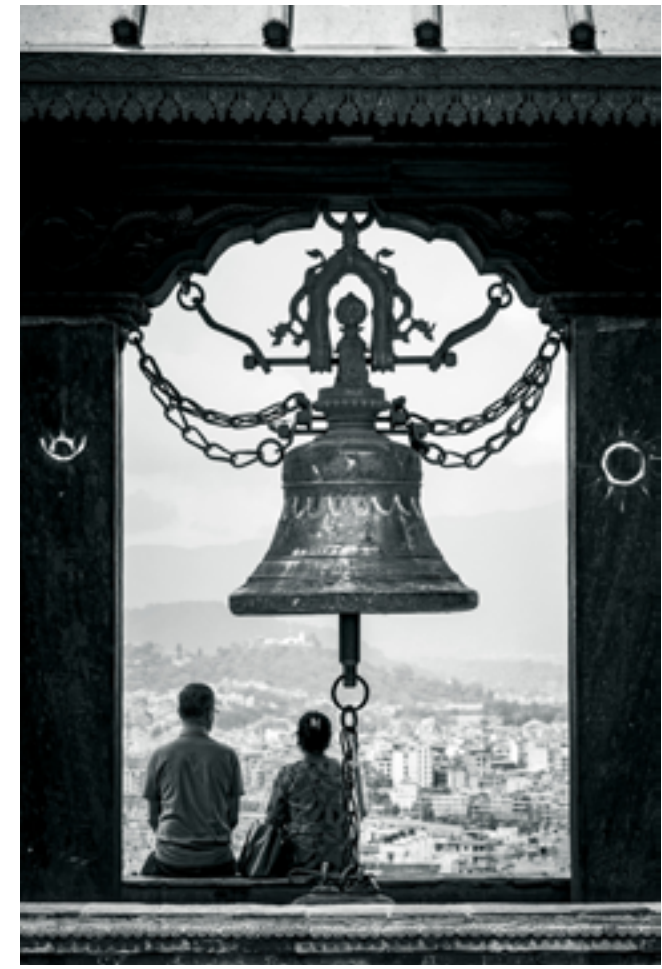


Bagh Bhairab Temple. Photo: Rajendra Malla

The photowalk encouraged participants to slow down and observe how light moved across brick facades, how layers of texture and color shaped compositions, and how stories could emerge from ordinary interactions. For many, it became an exercise in observation, and finding visual narratives within spaces



Participants Capturing Street Images. Photo: Sharad Shrestha



*Framed by Faith.
Photo: Om Prakash Yadav*



*On the Way to Temple with Grandma.
Photo: Shushina Maharjan*

that reveal themselves gradually. More than just a photography outing, the Kirtipur photowalk became a shared experience of exploration, conversation, and storytelling through images.

This walk also carried special significance as we celebrated 19 years of PhotoWalk Nepal; marking nearly two decades of free photowalks, shared learning experiences, and a growing community connected through photography and visual storytelling. Following the walk, participants, supporters, and friends gathered together for a traditional Newari feast to celebrate the occasion.



Celebrating 19 Years of PhotoWalk Nepal with a Newari Feast.

BOUDDHA PHOTOWALK (20-JUN-2026)

Circling Stories Around the Great Stupa

Centered around one of Kathmandu's most iconic cultural landmarks, our Buddha Photowalk offered participants an opportunity to explore a space where spirituality, daily life, and visual storytelling intersect. Beginning around the Boudhanath Stupa and extending into the surrounding streets, monasteries, and marketplaces, participants photographed the daily life moments of the neighborhood; devotees circling the stupa in prayer, monks and residents going about their daily routines, vibrant colors and textures, and the countless details that contribute to Buddha's distinctive atmosphere.



Boudhanath Stupa. Photo: Kushal Raj Shrestha

The photowalk encouraged participants to look beyond familiar landmarks and engage more deeply with observation and storytelling. Changing light, fleeting interactions, and layers of activity provided opportunities to explore composition, timing, and the relationship between people and place. For many participants, the experience became an exercise in slowing down, paying attention, and discovering meaningful photographs within ordinary moments.



Lighting the Butter Lamps. Photo: Shushina Maharjan



Souvenir Shop Display. Photo: Sharad Shrestha



Monks at Boudhanath. Photo: Om Prakash Yadav

A special highlight of the day was the presence of Mr. Mani Lama, one of the pioneers of travel photography in Nepal. Participants had the privilege of viewing his photo books and listening to stories and experiences gathered over decades of photographic exploration. His insights offered valuable perspectives on travel, observation, and the power of photography to document culture and place. More than just a photography outing, the Buddha Photowalk became a shared experience of learning, inspiration, and community.



Creating Memory with Mr Mani Lama.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Submit a photo story or article to FRAME

We welcome photo stories and articles submissions from photographers and storytellers of all experience levels.

Submissions should be sent by email to framemagzn@gmail.com with the subject line 'Photo Story Submission for FRAME'

Submission Guidelines

- All stories (and photographs) should be from within Nepal
- Five to fifteen high quality and thoughtfully edited images (minimum 3000 pixels on the longer side, lossless JPEG format saved at highest quality), accompanied by captions
- Photo stories should include a short description or introduction
- Written submissions should be clear, original, and well-structured
- All submissions must be the original work of the contributor

What to Include

- Your name, short bio, and a close-up portrait
- Title of the story or project
- A brief description of the work
- Your website URL, and social media links
- Image files or a viewing link (Google Drive / Dropbox)

Detailed submission instructions and deadlines will be announced periodically on our website.

Submit photographs for 'Frames of Month' Contest

Frames of the Month is a recurring monthly photo contest by FRAMES, created to recognize and celebrate outstanding photography within our community. Each month, photographers are invited to submit their best work, from which **three selected photographs** will be featured in the FRAME e-magazine and on the PhotoWalk Nepal website. At the end of the year, the best photograph from all monthly selections will be awarded the **Photo of the Year**, along with attractive prizes. This initiative aims to encourage consistency, creativity, and storytelling throughout the year.

Submissions should be sent by email to framemagzn@gmail.com before the end of each month with the subject line 'Frames of the Month Submission'. Late submissions will not be considered.

Read the **Submission guidelines and Judging criteria** on our website at: www.photowalknepal.com/frame/frames-of-the-month/

PHOTO STORIES

PHOTOWALK NEPAL COMPLETES 19 YEARS

Nineteen Years of Community, Photography, and Shared Experiences



Photowalk at Kathmandu Durbar Square, November 2008.

This year on May 17th, PhotoWalk Nepal completed 19 years of free photowalks, marking nearly two decades of bringing photographers together through shared experiences of observation, learning, and visual storytelling.

What began as a simple initiative to connect people through photography gradually evolved into a growing community shaped by curiosity, friendship, creativity, and exploration. Over the years, PhotoWalk Nepal has organized photowalks in different parts of Nepal across historic towns, temples, marketplaces, natural landscapes, festivals, and everyday public spaces, encouraging participants to look beyond obvious scenes and engage more deeply with the environments around them.



Photowalk at Dattatreya Square, Bhaktapur, October 2018.



PhotoWalk Nepal Trip to Bardia, October 2018.

At its core, the idea has always remained simple: photography as a way of seeing, learning, and connecting. Through these walks, photographers of different backgrounds and experience levels have gathered not only to make photographs, but also to exchange ideas, learn from one another, and build lasting relationships through a shared passion for storytelling.

The 19-year milestone was celebrated during a special photowalk in Kirtipur, followed by a traditional Newari feast shared among participants, supporters, and members of the community. The occasion became not only a celebration of longevity, but also a reflection on the many friendships, conversations, and experiences built over the years through countless walks and shared frames.



PhotoWalk Nepal Trip to Meghauli, Chitwan, December 2022.



Inauguration of photo exhibition celebrating 10 years of PhotoWalk Nepal, May 2017.

As PhotoWalk Nepal continues to grow, its vision remains rooted in accessibility, community, and meaningful engagement with photography. Along the way, the organization has also been supported by various partners and institutions whose encouragement has helped expand opportunities for photographers and strengthen the broader photography community in Nepal.

Today, PhotoWalk Nepal continues its journey through regular photowalks, collaborations, workshops, visual storytelling initiatives, and the publication of FRAME, its quarterly e-magazine dedicated to photography and photographic narratives.



PhotoWalk Nepal 19 Year Celebration during photowalk at Kirtipur, May 2026.

Nineteen years later, the spirit remains unchanged: to walk, observe, learn, and tell stories together.

THE VIEW FROM MY WORKPLACE

- Santosh Basnet

Some people begin their mornings with the sound of traffic and busy streets. My mornings begin with birdsong, flowing rivers, and the whispers of the jungle.
 Born and raised on the edge of the forest, nature has always been an integral part of my life. The calls of birds, the movements of wildlife, and the ever-changing moods of the jungle shaped my childhood and gradually grew into a lifelong passion for wildlife and conservation.
 That passion led me to a career in wildlife tourism, and today I feel privileged to work at Meghauri Serai, A Taj Safari Lodge, situated beside the Rapti River on the edge of Chitwan National Park.



Spotted Deers (Axis axis) crossing the Rapti River.



Bengal Tiger (Panthera tigris tigris) coming to the Rapti river to cool off.

From my workplace, every day brings a new story. The tranquil Rapti reflects golden sunrises and vibrant sunsets, while the wilderness beyond serves as a reminder of Chitwan's extraordinary biodiversity. A Greater One-horned Rhinoceros may appear along the riverbank, a Bengal Tiger may quietly emerge from the grasslands, or Gharials, Crocodiles, and countless bird species may create a scene that feels like a living documentary.



Asian Openbill Stork (Anastomus oscitans) foraging in the Rapti river.



Marsh Mugger Crocodile (*Crocodylus palustris*) on the river bank.

The beauty of this place lies not only in its landscape but also in the life that surrounds it. Every encounter with wildlife teaches patience, respect, and a deeper appreciation for the natural world.

For me, this is more than just a workplace; it is a privilege. The view changes every day, but the feeling remains the same: I am exactly where I belong, at the edge of the jungle, sharing the wonders of wildlife with the world.



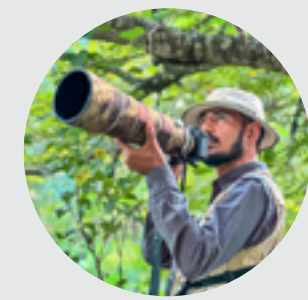
Lesser Adjutant Stork (*Leptoptilos javanicus*) in Rapti river.



Bengal Tiger (*Panthera tigris tigris*) walking along the river side.



Greater One-horned Rhino (*Rhinoceros Unicornis*) grazing in the grassland across the river from Meghauli Serai.



Santosh Basnet is a conservation naturalist and Head Naturalist at Meghauli Serai. With more than a decade of experience exploring the wildlife landscapes of Chitwan National Park and protected areas across India, he combines his expertise in natural history with a passion for wildlife photography.

THE VANISHING HIMALAYAS

- Gautam Dhimal

In 2005, I photographed the Khumbu region of Nepal from the open doorway of a helicopter. The experience was far from quiet. The relentless sound of the rotors, the vibration of the aircraft, the smell of fuel, the thin mountain air and the constant awareness of altitude filled every moment. Yet somewhere beyond the noise was a different kind of silence. A stillness that only the Himalayas can create.

At the time, I saw these photographs as an adventure. I carried both film cameras and some of the earliest digital equipment available. I worried about how the gear would perform in the cold and at altitude, but it never missed a beat. What I did not realize was that I was also creating a record of a landscape that was already beginning to change.

More than two decades later, many glaciers throughout the Himalayas have retreated, snow patterns have shifted, and mountain communities are witnessing the effects of a warming planet. These black and white photographs have become more than images. They have become documents. A glimpse into a moment in time that cannot be recreated.

I chose black and white because it removes distraction. Without colour, attention shifts to shape, texture, light and scale. The mountains become less about geography and more about presence.



Gautam Dhimal is a Kathmandu based filmmaker, producer, and visual storyteller working across documentary, commercial, and editorial productions. His work often explores culture, people, and place through a cinematic documentary approach. He has collaborated on projects with international broadcasters and brands including BBC One, Disney, FX, and Red Bull.



Thamserku Himal Panorama.



These photographs now form part of a larger journey through *Until We Act*, a long term visual project documenting environmental change, disappearing landscapes and the relationship between people and nature across the Hindu Kush Himalayas and other vulnerable regions of the world. Photography cannot stop a glacier from melting, but it can preserve memory, spark conversation and remind us what is at stake.



The Himalayas have stood for millions of years. Whether future generations inherit the same mountains depends not on the peaks themselves, but on the choices we make today.

Until We Act.

THE HIGH VALLEYS OF MANANG

- Aditri Yadav

Arriving in Manang feels like entering a different world. The forests thin out, the valley widens, and suddenly the snow-covered giants of the Annapurna range dominate the horizon. For many trekkers, Manang is simply a stop along a famous trail. For me, it was a place where every bend in the path offered a different view of the Himalaya and another reason to reach for the camera.



One of the first places that drew me in was Chhinde Lake, often called the Blue Lake. On a calm day, its still waters mirror the surrounding peaks so perfectly that the boundary between mountain and reflection seems to disappear. It is the kind of place that asks you to stop, sit down, and simply look.

Beyond the lakes and mountain views, Manang carries a deep sense of history and faith. The monastery at Bhraka rises above the village like a guardian of the valley, while the monastery in Manang village continues to serve as a centre of daily life. Prayer flags flutter in the wind, monks move through ancient courtyards, and traditions that have endured for generations remain woven into everyday life.





Looking east, the valley stretches beneath the towering walls of Annapurna II and Annapurna IV. Looking west, the landscape gradually opens toward Khangsar and the route to Tilicho. Between these viewpoints lie scattered villages, stone walls, grazing pastures, and countless reminders that people have lived in these high valleys for centuries.

What I remember most, however, is the feeling of walking through the landscape itself. Following trails beneath snow-covered peaks, every rise in the path seemed to reveal another scene worth stopping for. In Manang, the destination is unforgettable, but it is the journey through these high valleys that stays with you long after you leave.



Aditri Yadav is a grade eleven student and an enthusiastic young photographer. She has been exploring photography for the past eight years and enjoys observing and documenting the natural world. Her main interests include wildlife photography, travel photography, and macro photography.

A HAVEN FOR CLASSICAL MUSIC

- Rajendra Malla

On the second day of every month, at exactly five o'clock in the evening, classical music lovers gather in a hall at Yalamaya Kendra with great eagerness and anticipation, ready to immerse themselves in an evening of classical music. The program traditionally begins with performances by emerging artists of the younger generation, followed by presentations from more experienced senior musicians.



In the stillness before the performance, the tanpura, tabla, and harmonium await the musicians who will soon fill the hall with classical melodies.



Child artist Batika Bijuchhe performing classical vocals, accompanied by Mr. Jagannath Dhaugoda on tabla, Mr. Anil Prasad Poudel on harmonium, and Mr. Rochak Lamichhane on tanpura.

In today's fast-paced world, people seem busier than ever. Many find themselves constantly engaged with social media, while the pressures of daily life create stress both outside and inside the home. There is an increasing desire to achieve success quickly, to make a name for oneself and attain prosperity overnight. Yet the audience gathered inside the hall appears pleasantly detached from this relentless pace.



Mrs. Ishwori Upreti Khadka performing on the sitar for Episode 240 of Yalamaya Classic at Yalamaya Kendra, accompanied by Pt. Achyutram Bhandari on tabla and Mrs. Bina Upreti Prasai on Tanpura.



Mr. Agraj Bhattarai performing classical vocals, accompanied by Gagannath Dhaugoda on tabla, his Guru Ma Mrs. Laboni Chakraborty on harmonium, and Kamal Buda on Sitar.



Vocal performances by Ms. Anjuli Hamal and Ms. Sudha Sherpa, accompanied by Mr. Pramesh Mangarati on tabla, Mr. Sanjeev Ale on harmonium, and Ms. Abisa Thami on tanpura.

Although classical music is not new to Nepal, the genre has often remained on the margins of mainstream attention. Even so, a deep appreciation for classical music is flourishing among the younger generation.

These encouraging signs offer hope that classical music may once again become a widely celebrated and cherished part of Nepali cultural life.



Mr. Umesh Raj Khadka performing classical vocals, accompanied by Mr. Miles Tanukar on tabla, Mr. Milan Tanukar on violin, and Mr. Krishna Luitel on harmonium. Shreya Dhakal and Debshree Acharya on Tanpura.



Disciples of flute Guru Shree Jeevan Ale, ready to perform in memory of the late legends, Shree Gurudev Kamat and Shree Rabin Das Shrestha. Left to Right – Mr. Pramesh Mangarati on Tabla, Mr. Bijay Kumar Darlami Magar, Mr. Dambar Khadkathoki, Mr. Rajkumar BK, Mr. Lucky Maharjan, Mr. Min Ghalan, Mr. Udaya Shrestha and Mr. Pabendra Gole on Flute.



Mr. Pratik Raj Dhakal performing classical vocals, accompanied by Mr. Ananta Prajapati on tabla and Mr. Yatiraj Adhikari on violin.



Rajendra Malla is an IT professional and a passionate music enthusiast at heart who uses photography to explore the intersection of technology, culture, and artistic expression. This photo story is a personal tribute to the timeless beauty of classical music and the moments that surround it.

THE ANCIENT SHRINE OF SHESH NARAYAN

- Anita Yadav

Beneath a wooded hillside near the historic town of Pharping, approximately twenty kilometers southwest of Kathmandu, Shesh Narayan Temple is one of the valley's most revered shrines dedicated to Lord Vishnu.

Shesh Narayan is one of the four sacred Narayan temples that stand in the cardinal directions around the Kathmandu Valley, alongside Changu Narayan, Ichangu Narayan, and Bishankhu Narayan. Together, these temples are believed to have been established during the Lichchhavi period under King Vishnugupta to protect the valley and its people.





The temple's most remarkable features are carved directly into the rock face behind the shrine. Panels depicting Vishnu reclining upon the cosmic serpent Shesha, along with Garuda and scenes from Hindu mythology, emerge from the stone itself. Facing the main temple are Licchavi era statues of Hanuman and Garuda, silent guardians that have watched over the site for centuries.

Behind the shrine lies a natural cave believed to be the place where Vishnu once rested. From the rock flows a sacred spring whose water is collected by devotees and taken home in bottles as a blessing. The stream feeds a pond below the temple known as Basuki Kunda, where colourful koi carp glide among partially submerged stone sculptures weathered by time.



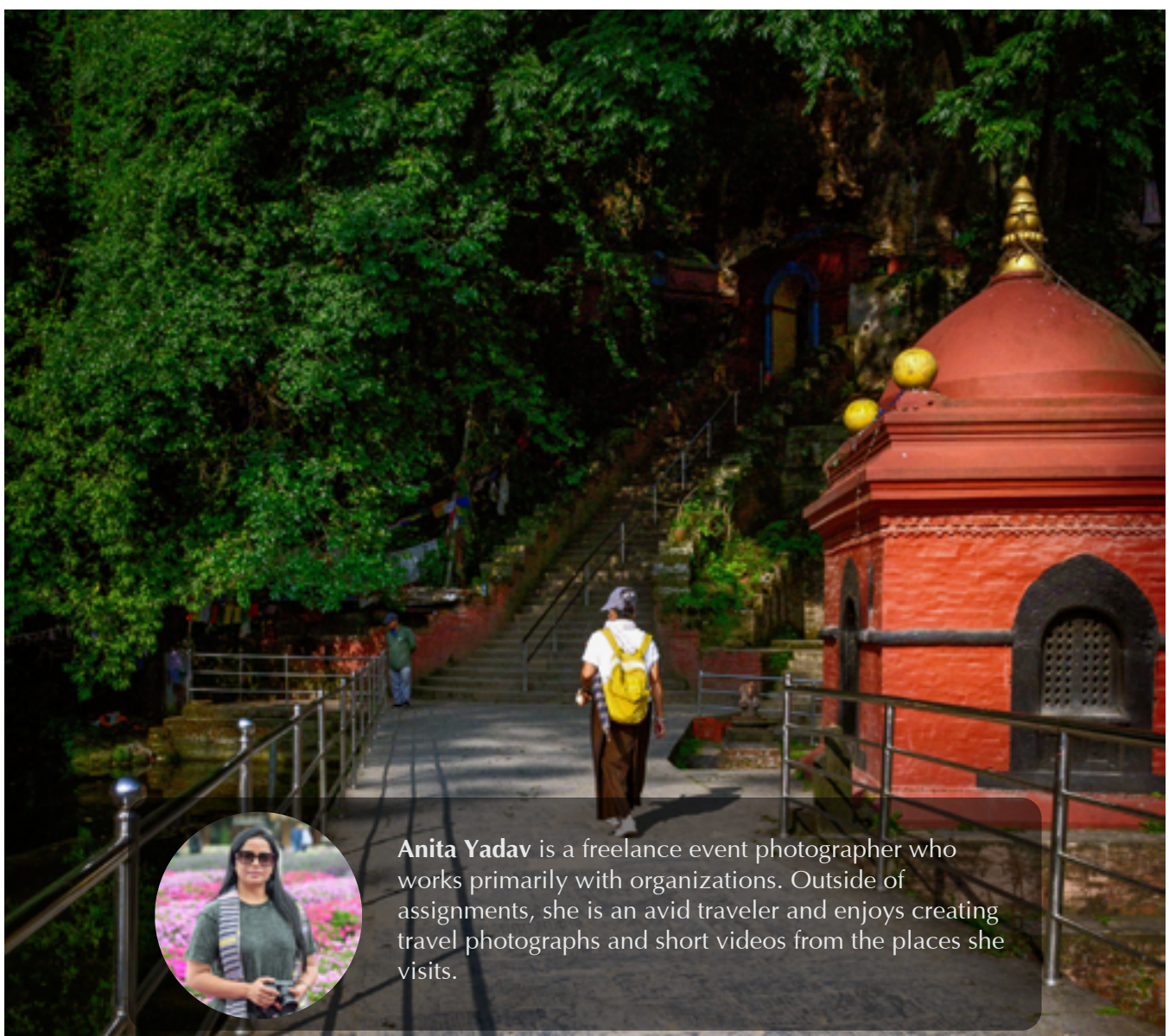
It is believed that an elderly priest at the temple could no longer make the journey to the Bagmati River to collect water for the daily rituals. In response, a sacred spring emerged at the site.

Another legend recounts how heavy rains once caused the waters of Basuki Kunda to rise, preventing the priest from reaching the temple. A pair of Nagas, divine serpents, appeared and stretched themselves across the pond, forming a living bridge that allowed him to continue his duties. To this day, local residents place slender wooden poles in the pond each year to honour the two serpents and commemorate their act of devotion.





Today, Shesh Narayan remains a place where mythology, history, and faith continue to coexist. Amid the sound of flowing water and the presence of ancient stone carvings, visitors find not only a sacred temple but also a living connection to the stories and traditions that have shaped the Kathmandu Valley for generations.

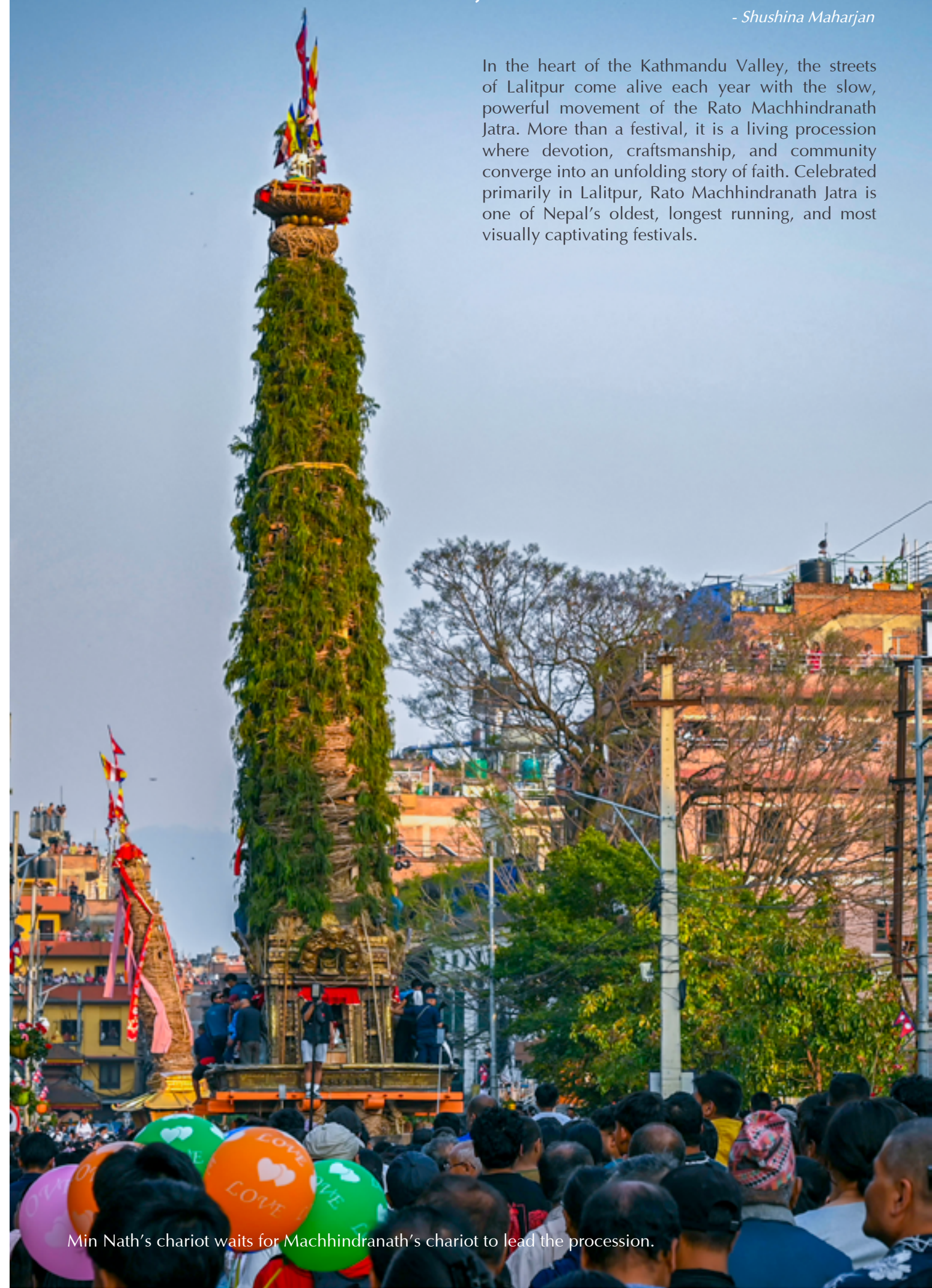


Anita Yadav is a freelance event photographer who works primarily with organizations. Outside of assignments, she is an avid traveler and enjoys creating travel photographs and short videos from the places she visits.

NEPAL'S LIVING PROCESSION OF RAIN, FAITH AND COMMUNITY

- Shushina Maharjan

In the heart of the Kathmandu Valley, the streets of Lalitpur come alive each year with the slow, powerful movement of the Rato Machhindranath Jatra. More than a festival, it is a living procession where devotion, craftsmanship, and community converge into an unfolding story of faith. Celebrated primarily in Lalitpur, Rato Machhindranath Jatra is one of Nepal's oldest, longest running, and most visually captivating festivals.



Min Nath's chariot waits for Machhindranath's chariot to lead the procession.

Historical and Cultural Significance

According to legend, the Kathmandu Valley once suffered a devastating drought. King Narendra Dev, together with spiritual leaders, brought the deity Rato Machhindranath from Bungamati to the valley to restore rainfall and prosperity. Following the deity's arrival, the rains returned, and the festival became an annual expression of gratitude and prayers for agricultural abundance.



Thousands of devotees pulling the chariot of Rato Machhindranath.

For this reason, Machhindranath is also revered as the "God of Rain." Over the centuries, the festival has come to symbolize hope, renewal, and the enduring relationship between humans, nature, and the divine. It remains especially significant to the Newar community, preserving centuries-old traditions of music, ritual, craftsmanship, and collective participation.



Min Nath's chariot being turned into position before resting for the night.

The Chariot: A Moving Monument

One of the festival's most striking visual features is its towering wooden chariot, traditionally constructed by Newar craftsmen using age old techniques passed down through generations.

Its defining features include:

- A height of approximately 60 feet (18–20 metres), depending on construction.
- A structure built primarily from wood, bamboo, ropes, and traditional joinery techniques.
- Massive wheels that enable its movement through the narrow streets of Patan.
- Decorations of sacred fabrics, offerings, and ritual objects.
- A tall spire that dominates the skyline.



Monks receiving alms in front of the sacred chariot wheels.

For photographers, the chariot becomes a compelling subject of scale, geometry, craftsmanship, and human interaction. Yet Rato Machhindranath Jatra is more than a festival moving through the streets of Patan, it is a living archive of Nepal's collective memory. Every pull of the rope carries centuries of faith, every turn of the wheel echoes tradition, and every photograph becomes a witness to a living heritage.



Shushina Maharjan is a photographer based in Nepal, specializing in newborn and maternity photography, with a deep appreciation for culture, rituals, and everyday human moments. From ancient temples to the candid smiles of children, she seeks to capture images filled with emotion, warmth, and a strong sense of place, preserving moments that might otherwise go unnoticed.

WHERE THE SACRED MEETS THE STREET

- Irvin Shrestha



The Living Goddess Kumari being carried through a curtain of marigolds during Indrajatra festival.



An elderly man crossing the square at Boudhha.

In Kathmandu, the sacred is never far away. The same streets that carry vendors, schoolchildren, and motorcycles also carry gods and goddesses during festivals and processions. The same hands that sweep doorways at dawn also light butter lamps and ring temple bells. Daily life and devotion exist side by side, often separated by little more than a glance.

These photographs were made in the streets, squares, and temple courtyards of the Kathmandu Valley, not in search of spectacle, but in search of the everyday.

They are moments that often pass unnoticed: a woman carrying brass vessels through a tangle of overhead wires, an elderly man crossing a sun-warmed square, grain slipping through weathered hands, a sadhu resting quietly on ancient steps as the city moves around him. Individually, they are ordinary scenes. Together, they form a portrait of a city shaped by both routine and reverence.

This collection explores the delicate intersection between the ordinary and the divine. It is a celebration of the moments that define Kathmandu, not the grand or dramatic, but the quiet rhythms of a city where the sacred remains woven into everyday life.



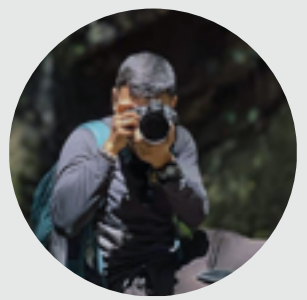
A sadhu wrapped in saffron sits at the foot of a great stairway, while the city walks past without a pause.



Lady carrying brass worshipping vessel passing through a busy stone paved alley.



A man walking into a temple courtyard through an ornate wooden gateway.



Irvin Shrestha is a software developer, and photo enthusiast. He enjoys capturing people portraits, everyday life, and travel moments through the lens.

FRAMECRAFT

TOOLS, TECHNIQUES, AND WAYS OF SEEING

Framecraft is where technique meets intention. This section explores the tools, decisions, and creative thinking behind compelling photographs. From light and composition to field practices and post processing. Whether you're refining your craft or discovering new ways of seeing, Framecraft is designed to help you photograph with purpose. This month we will talk about color grading.



Jungle Babbler (*Argya striata*) feeding a young Common Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*). Photo: Om Prakash Yadav

Storytelling in Wildlife Photography

- Om Prakash Yadav

Great wildlife photographs do more than document a species, they invite viewers into a story. By combining behaviour, emotion, habitat, composition, and light, photographers can create images that spark curiosity and reveal the hidden lives of animals.

More than a record of two birds, the photograph on the facing page tells a story of survival and deception: a Jungle Babbler feeding a young Common Cuckoo. Behaviour, interaction, and context combine to create an image that invites curiosity and deeper understanding.

Capture Action, Not Just Appearance

Many wildlife photographs begin and end with an animal looking directly into the camera. While such portraits can be beautiful, they often tell us very little about the animal's life.

Instead, look for actions that define the species: hunting, feeding, grooming, playing, displaying aggression, defending territory, or caring for young. These moments provide insight into behaviour and immediately create a stronger narrative.

A photograph of a tiger standing in the grass may be visually impressive. A photograph of that same tiger stalking prey or teaching cubs to hunt tells a story.

Behaviour transforms a wildlife photograph from a record into a narrative.



Common Merganser (*Mergus merganser*) and Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*) defending fishing territory in river.

Build an Emotional Connection

The eyes are often the most powerful storytelling tool available to a wildlife photographer. They create a connection between the subject and the viewer, drawing attention and encouraging an emotional response.

Whether photographing a snow leopard, a rhino, or a small bird, sharp and expressive eyes can transform an image from a simple record into a memorable encounter.



Bengal Tiger (Panthera tigris tigris) in its natural habitat, looking aggressively at the camera.

Let the Habitat Tell the Story

Wildlife does not exist in isolation. Every animal is part of a larger environment, and including elements of that environment helps provide context and a sense of place.

Rather than filling the frame entirely with your subject, consider showing part of its world. A useful approach is to think of the frame in layers: the subject occupies a portion of the composition, supported by foreground and background elements that help establish atmosphere, while additional environmental details reveal the broader landscape.

The amount of space surrounding a subject can also influence the story. Tight framing may emphasize confinement, vulnerability, or intensity. Wider compositions can communicate freedom, solitude, scale, or the harsh realities of life in the wilderness.



Greater One-horned Rhino (Rhinoceros Unicornis) comes to the river for a drink.

Use Composition to Guide the Viewer

Strong composition helps keep the viewer immersed in the photograph. Natural elements such as rivers, trails, tree lines, grass patterns, or light can act as visual guides, leading the eye toward the subject.

At the same time, thoughtful composition helps prevent the viewer's attention from drifting toward the edges of the frame. The goal is to create a visual journey that naturally returns to the story's main character.



Asian Openbill Stork (Anastomus oscitans) in the nest, shading her young ones from the harsh sunlight.

Create Mood Through Light

Light does far more than illuminate a subject, it shapes the emotional tone of an image.

The soft, warm light of sunrise and sunset often creates a sense of calm and beauty, while dramatic shadows can introduce tension and mystery. A brightly lit animal surrounded by darker tones naturally attracts attention and creates a spotlight effect that reinforces the story.

As photographers, we cannot always control the behaviour of wildlife, but we can often choose the light in which we photograph it.



White-throated Kingfisher (Halcyon smyrnensis) performing a courtship display.

The Story Continues in Post Processing

Storytelling does not end when the shutter is released. The editing process plays an important role in refining and strengthening the narrative.

One of the most valuable habits a photographer can develop is patience. Avoid editing your photographs immediately after a shoot. Instead, allow a few days to pass before reviewing your images. The emotional distance will help you evaluate them more objectively.

When making your final selection, choose the photographs that best communicate your original story rather than those that are simply the sharpest or most technically perfect.



Spotted Deers (Axis axis) adult males fighting for dominance.

Final Thoughts

Wildlife photography is often associated with rare species, expensive equipment, and dramatic encounters. While these elements can produce remarkable images, storytelling comes from observation and intent.

The next time you are in the field, challenge yourself to look beyond the animal itself. Look for behaviour, emotion, relationships, light, and environment. When these elements come together, your photographs begin to do more than show wildlife, they begin to tell its story.

QUICK TIPS

Photograph Behaviour, Not Just Species

A rare animal is not automatically a great story. Look for moments that reveal how the animal lives.

Wait for the Interaction

Relationships between animals often create stronger narratives than isolated portraits. Be patient and watch for meaningful moments.

Follow the Light

Light influences mood. Early morning and late afternoon most often provide the atmosphere and mood needed for compelling storytelling.

Include a Sense of Place

Show enough of the habitat to help viewers understand where the story is unfolding.

Ask “What Happens Next?”

The strongest images spark curiosity. If your photograph makes viewers wonder about the moments before and after the frame, you’re on the right track.

Edit for the Story

When selecting images, choose the photograph that best communicates the story, not necessarily the sharpest or most technically perfect frame.

FEATURES



Om Prakash Yadav is a wildlife photographer, and Nikon School instructor dedicated to wildlife conservation. Om uses his camera as a tool for research, activism, and storytelling to promote sustainable coexistence between people and wildlife.

SNOW LEOPARD SCOUT'S DIARY

From the Field | Himalayan Conservation Journal

BIOCOS Nepal's Snow Leopard Scouts are based at the organization's satellite office, **Snow Leopard Haven**, a high-altitude education-focused lodge situated in the heart of prime snow leopard habitat in Manang. Monitoring snow leopards and their habitat under the Snow Leopard Stewardship Program, jointly implemented by Great Plains Zoo and BIOCOS Nepal, forms an important part of their daily work.

Snow Leopard Scout's Diary brings readers into their world. Every issue shares moments from the past three months in the field: observations, encounters, challenges, and photographs captured by the scouts themselves, offering a rare glimpse into life on the frontlines of Himalayan conservation.



Photo: Tashi Bista

Eyes in the Sky: Following Snow Leopards with Scouts and Drones

In March this year, wildlife filmmaker Tashi Bista, who previously worked with BBC Earth's Tiger Island, led a team of photographers and videographers to Manang to assess the feasibility of a future wildlife documentary and explore how drone technology could support wildlife research in the Himalayas.

As planned, the team met with BIOCOS scouts and set out for Snow Leopard Haven, which overlooks a breeding area where a mother snow leopard and her cubs have been observed repeatedly since 2022. During the hike, the scouts suddenly left the main trail after noticing vultures circling and perching on nearby cliffs. Shortly afterwards, Tashi received a call informing him that the scouts had located a fresh snow leopard kill.

From a distant, the team began scanning the surrounding slopes. Subtle movement among the rocks caught their attention. Since reaching the scouts' location would have taken more than an hour, a thermal drone was immediately deployed. The drone quickly located the snow leopard, allowing the team to observe the elusive predator from above. They documented the animal moving across the cliffs and scent-marking against the spectacular backdrop of the Annapurna Himalaya. Remarkably, the snow leopard showed no reaction to the drone and continued its natural behaviour, demonstrating the potential of thermal drones as a non-invasive tool for wildlife research.

After returning to Manang village, the team moved to Snow Leopard Haven next day and spent two days searching without success. On the third day, as clouds gathered and snowfall approached, they heard distinctive calls echoing from a forested slope opposite the lodge, a location that would have required



Photo: Paras Bikram Singh

several hours to reach on foot. A thermal drone was launched immediately, revealing a mother snow leopard calling. Moments later, two cubs emerged. The team watched as the family moved upslope, the cubs playing energetically in the fresh snow while their mother calmly led the way.

The following day, BIOCOS scouts located the family again in exceptionally well-camouflaged terrain. Guided by the scouts, the drone team was able to continue observations from above. The cubs were seen playing with the skin of a previously killed yak, treating it almost like a toy, while their mother remained nearby. Two adult yaks stood within sight, and the cubs cautiously approached them before retreating, displaying a fascinating mix of curiosity, confidence, and caution. Throughout the observations, neither the cubs nor their mother appeared disturbed by the drone's presence.

These remarkable encounters demonstrate how the combination of experienced local scouts, experience drone pilot and emerging technologies such as thermal drones can create new opportunities for studying and conserving one of the Himalayas' most elusive predators.



Photo: Tashi Bista

MASTERS OF LENS

Masters of Lens celebrates the visionaries who have shaped Nepal’s photographic landscape through their creativity, dedication, and storytelling. In each issue, we feature a distinguished photographer, exploring their journey, artistic philosophy, and the stories behind their most compelling work.

Mani Lama: The Photographer Who Carried Nepal to the World



Long before digital cameras, social media, and online galleries made photographs instantly accessible, there was a time when a postcard was often the first glimpse of Nepal for people around the world. Many of those postcards carried the images of one man: Mani Lama.

Born in 1946 in Bouddha, where his father served as the head lama of the Bouddhanath Stupa, Mani Lama would go on to become one of Nepal’s pioneering travel photographers. His journey into photography began unexpectedly during his years in the United States. In 1970, he received a scholarship to study Agricultural Science at Merced College in California. Alongside his academic studies, he completed two semesters of photography, a decision that would shape the rest of his life.

After completing his studies, Lama hoped to continue at Fresno State University. Financial limitations seemed certain to end that dream until an unexpected opportunity appeared. While presenting a slideshow of photographs from Nepal, he caught the attention of a manager from

Southern Pacific Bank. Impressed by both the images and the young photographer behind them, the manager offered support that enabled Lama to continue his education and earn a Bachelor’s degree in Agricultural Science.

Returning to Nepal, Lama explored career opportunities in government agencies and agricultural projects. When those opportunities failed to materialize as he had hoped, he turned to photography.

At the time, Nepal’s printing industry was still in its infancy. Determined to share his images, Lama travelled to Singapore in 1983 carrying one hundred of his best photographs. From those, he selected eighteen images to be printed as postcards. The response was immediate and overwhelming. The postcards became a success, encouraging him to travel extensively across Nepal in search of new photographs.

What followed was a remarkable chapter in Nepali photography. From the high Himalaya to ancient temples, remote villages to bustling city streets, Lama documented the country’s landscapes, culture, and people with a traveller’s curiosity and a photographer’s eye. In 1989, he produced his largest collection: seventy-two different postcards along with several posters that helped introduce Nepal’s beauty to audiences both at home and abroad.

His contribution extends beyond postcards. Over the years, he has published three significant coffee-table books: Nepal in Monochrome, Boudha: Restoring the Great Stupa, and Nepal: The Himalayan Kingdom. Together, these works form an important visual record of Nepal’s heritage, landscapes, and changing times.

Today, approaching his eightieth year, Mani Lama continues to live in his family home in Bouddha. While the tools have changed from film cameras to compact digital cameras and even smartphones his passion for photography remains unchanged.



Braga Gumpa Manang (2009)
Photo: Mani Lama

For generations of Nepali photographers, Mani Lama’s legacy is not only in the images he created but also in the paths he opened. At a time when travel photography in Nepal was still largely unexplored, he showed that photographs could do more than document a place, they could inspire people to discover it.



Goats crossing the Kali Gandagi river in Kagbeni, Mustang, Nepal (2003). Photo: Mani Lama

FRAMES OF THE MONTH - APRIL 2026

Frames of the Month showcases three standout photographs selected from our monthly submissions. Chosen for their vision, craft, and storytelling, these images reflect the diverse ways photographers see, interpret, and frame the world. Here are the top photographs from our photowalk in April 2026.



Religious rites being performed by Bagmati river at Pashupatinath.
Photo: Shushina Maharjan



Hindu shrines and a devotee in Pashupatinath complex.
Photo: Kushal Raj Shrestha



Photo enthusiasts gearing up for Pashupatinath photo walk.
Photo: Rajendra Malla

FRAMES OF THE MONTH - MAY 2026

Frames of the Month showcases three standout photographs selected from our monthly submissions. Chosen for their vision, craft, and storytelling, these images reflect the diverse ways photographers see, interpret, and frame the world. Here are the top photographs from our photowalk in May 2026.

1



Morning at Bagh Bhairab temple, Kirtipur.

Photo: Rajendra Malla

2



Lady returning from morning worship at Bagh Bhairab temple, Kirtipur.

Photo: Shushina Maharjan

3



Worshipping at a shrine near Bagh Bhairab temple, Kirtipur.

Photo: Anshuman Yadav

FRAMES OF THE MONTH - JUNE 2026

Frames of the Month showcases three standout photographs selected from our monthly submissions. Chosen for their vision, craft, and storytelling, these images reflect the diverse ways photographers see, interpret, and frame the world. Here are the top photographs from our photowalk in June 2026.

1



Praying monk at a monastery in Bouddha.
Photo: Shushina Maharjan

2



Resting on seats around the
Bouddhanath stupa.
Photo: Kushal Raj Shrestha

3



Entrance to Bouddhanath Stupa.
Photo: Sharad Shrestha

EXPERIENCING THE NIKON Z5 II

- Anshuman Yadav



1/100s, f/5.6, ISO 3200

Some stories only become visible when the light disappears.

Kathmandu after sunset is a different city entirely. Temple courtyards fill with the warm flicker of butter lamps, and the faces of people gathered around evening rituals carry a quality of light that no artificial setup can replicate. If you want to tell those stories honestly, your camera has to keep up without getting in the way.

That was the challenge when I began working with the Nikon Z5II.

What stood out immediately was how it handled low light. The autofocus detection range extends down to -10 EV, meaning

the camera can lock onto a subject in conditions barely visible to the naked eye. Filming inside a dimly lit puja room or following a procession through an unlit alley, the camera found its subject and held it. That kind of reliability changes how you work. You stop hesitating and start moving.

The 5-axis in-body vibration reduction offers stabilization equivalent to a 7.5 stop increase in shutter speed, which made handheld shooting far more forgiving than expected. Most frames were captured without a tripod, and the steadiness showed. Not as a technical achievement, but as a natural quality that suited the material.



1/100s, f/8, ISO 640

The autofocus system supports subject detection across nine categories, from people and animals to vehicles. In crowded environments such as street markets, busy ghats, and festival processions, the camera tracked subjects consistently through the frame. This made it easier to focus on composition and capturing the moment.



1/500s, f/8, ISO 200

For those who also shoot video alongside stills, the Z5II records full-frame 4K up to 30fps without thermal issues, with 4K/60p available at a 1.5x crop. Codec options include 12-bit N-RAW, 10-bit H.265, and 8-bit H.264, giving strong latitude in post.

What you ultimately come back to is what the Z5II represents as a complete package. Previous cameras at this price point have typically been cut-down versions of more expensive bodies, assembled from older technology. The Z5II is not that. It shares its sensor and processor with cameras well above its price, and it shows in every part of the experience.

For photography in Nepal, where the light is unpredictable, the moments are unscripted, and the distances you carry equipment matter, a camera that is both capable and unobtrusive is worth more than any single specification. The Z5II earns that description quietly and completely.

Equipment /Settings Used for This Project

- **Camera:** Nikon Z5 II
- **Lens:** Nikon Z 24-70mm f/4 S
- **Recording Format:** RAW HE*
- **Stabilization:** Effective in-body stabilization for handheld shooting
- **Autofocus:** Consistent and reliable during changing light conditions

Ideal for low light, and travel photography.

Z 5II

STEP UP. STAND OUT.



Anshuman Yadav is a multimedia designer currently working with OLE Nepal. He specializes in video production, 2D animation, and digital storytelling, creating educational and visual media content. Alongside his professional work, he has a strong interest in wildlife photography and enjoys documenting birds and other wildlife during field visits and travels across Nepal.

XIAOMI 17T: THE TELEPHOTO MASTER

- CK James



True-to-life Leica Colors:

I absolutely love the Leica optical glass because it gives me authentic tones and realistic colors. Instead of that overly bright, artificial phone look, my street shots have a natural, moody character right out of the camera.

The Perfect Stealth Camera:

Being a street photographer means blending into the environment. Because this is just a regular-looking mobile phone, people on the streets completely ignore me, allowing me to capture 100% genuine, candid moments without making anyone uncomfortable.



Game-Changing 5x Optical Reach:

The dedicated 5x periscope lens is incredible. It gives me breathtaking image clarity and amazing detail from a distance, meaning I don't have to awkwardly crowd my subjects to get a tight, beautiful frame.

Incredible RAW Flexibility:

Shooting in RAW on the Xiaomi 17T changes everything. The sensor captures a massive amount of data, giving me tons of freedom in editing to precisely tweak my highlights, shadows, colors, and contrast.



Social Media Ready JPEGs:

Even when I just want to shoot quick JPEGs, the files come out rich and hefty at around 4–6MB. I never have to worry about compression or losing resolution when uploading directly to my feeds.

Never Miss a Moment:

The Leica Live View / Live Moment mode is a lifesaver for fast-paced environments. It continuously caches a few seconds of motion pictures, so if my reaction time is a split-second late, I can go into the live view and instantly recapture that exact peak moment.

Instant Shutter Response:

Speed is everything when a fleeting moment presents itself on the sidewalk. The shutter button on this phone responds immediately without any noticeable lag, meaning the split-second slice of life I see with my eyes is exactly what gets captured.



DSLR-Like Depth and Subject Separation:

The compression from the 5x focal length combined with Leica's processing produces a beautiful, natural background blur. It creates clean separation between my subject and a chaotic city background without looking like a messy software cutout.

Excellent Night Street Performance:

The main camera sensor handles low-light and neon-drenched night streets like a pro. It preserves deep shadow details and controls bright streetlamps without turning the image into a noisy or muddy mess.



James KC is a Kathmandu-based street and travel photographer, co-founder of StreetPhotographyNP, and a multi-year NIP Street Photographer of the Year. He often documents Nepal's everyday life and culture through his Leica-backed images.

Indian Peafowl (Pavo cristatus) male performing courtship display in Chitwan National Park.

Photo: Om Prakash Yadav



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