

**Study on
Bilateral Religious Tourism Prospects Between
India and Nepal**

(With special focus on the Survey of Indian Visitors to Nepal overland)

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Executive Summary

1. Tourism in Nepal is an important economic sector and contributes significantly to employment, income and foreign exchange earnings. It created 426,500 jobs, earned USD 497.8 million in government revenues and contributed 4% to Gross Domestic Product in 2015. According to the official figures of Nepal Government a total of 790,118 international tourists visited Nepal in 2014 and the number declined to 538,970 in 2015. India contributes almost 20 percent to the total tourist arrivals in Nepal. A total of 135,343 in 2014 and 75,124 Indian tourists visited Nepal by air. These numbers do not include the Indian tourists who entered Nepal overland; however, they include tourists from the third countries (countries other than India).
2. India received a total of 8.027 million foreign tourists in 2015. Nepal is one of the 15 top markets for India in terms of tourist arrivals. A total of 154,720 Nepali nationals visited India in 2015 and 93.9% of them used air route and 6.1% used land route.
3. Total number of Indians' departures in 2014 was 18.33 million and 98.64% of them used air passage, 1.18% land route and 0.18% used sea route. The number of domestic tourists in India stood at 1290.12 million in 2014.
4. In a normal year almost 13 percent of the international tourists visit Nepal as pilgrims. While 98,765 international tourists visited Nepal as pilgrims in 2014, the number dwindled to 14,996 in 2015. For the purpose of this report and in the context of Nepal, pilgrim alludes to a person believing in either Hindu or Buddhist faith.
5. Besides the natural attractions, Nepal possesses a plethora of cultural and religious attractions. Temple of Pashupatinath and Lumbini, the birthplace of Lord Buddha are two iconic religious heritages that attract a large number of Hindu and Buddhist pilgrims respectively. In addition, there are numerous shrines and sites in Nepal that are equally revered by Hindu and Buddhist people.
6. Nepal is a landlocked country sharing its geographical territories and cultural affinities primarily with India. The special and unique relations between India and Nepal permit open borders and free flow of visitors across the borders. Therefore, besides air route, a large number of Indian nationals enter Nepal overland for various purposes, such as holiday making, religious, business, social and cultural. Although the Indo-Nepal border is porous in nature, there are nine major entry points which records sizeable number of vehicles from India.
7. These nine points, from west to east of Nepal, are Mahendranagar (Gaddachauki), Dhangadhi (Mohana), Nepalgunj (Jamunaha), Bhairawa (Belhiya), Birgunj, Janakpur (Jaleswor and Vittamod), Biratnagar (Jogbani) and Jhapa (Kakarvitta).
8. A comprehensive survey has been conducted to find out an estimated number of Indian travelers who entered Nepal in the calendar year Bikram Sambat 2071 (April 16, 2014- April 15, 2015) and in Bikrum Sambat 2072 (April 16, 2015- April 15, 2016). The survey has been carried out by visiting the Custom Offices of the Government of Nepal located at the nine entry points where records of vehicles that entered Nepal according to the Nepali calendar year have been maintained. All the relevant data pertaining to the Indian visitors traveling to Nepal on different

modes of transportation have been gathered through the corresponding Custom Offices at the aforementioned entry points.

9. Types of vehicles that were taken into account while conducting the survey were in line with the system of data recording by the Custom Offices of Government of Nepal at the entry points. The types of these vehicles are categorized as motorcycle, car/jeep/van and bus only.
10. The survey has concluded that more Indian nationals entered into Nepal overland in the year Bikram Sambat 2071 than in Bikram Sambat 2072. This was mainly because of the earthquake in the beginning of year 2072 (April 2015) and political situation created by the Terai based political parties of Nepal beginning second half of BS 2072. Both events badly affected the overall travelling of Indian visitors to Nepal. The total international tourists (Including Indian) crossing the borders overland using various type of vehicles were 1,439,586 in BS 2071 and the number decreased to 1,021,507 in BS 2072.
11. According to '*Nepal Tourism Statistics*' published by Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation in 2014 and 2015, the total arrivals of third country tourists (tourists visiting Nepal other than Indian visitors) by land in 2071 sums to 140,878. In order to balance out the double counting of the total tourist arrivals by land, the figures stated in the '*Nepal Tourism Statistics*' are deducted from the figures derived in the survey. After subtracting the number of third country visitors by land in BS 2071, it can be asserted that *at least 1,298,708* Indian tourists visited Nepal via land. Similarly, a total of 136,400 tourists arrived in Nepal from the third countries by land in BS 2072. The data collected by the survey shows arrival of 1,021,507 Indian tourists. Therefore, after deducting the arrivals from the third countries, *at least 885,107* Indian visitors traveled to Nepal by land in BS 2072. These numbers are many times more than the official figures published by the Government of Nepal.
12. Belhiya, Bhairahwa is the busiest entry point having the highest number of visitors entering Nepal during the both consecutive years. Although, the number was staggeringly high with 718,984 visitors in BS 2071, it went down to 324,848 visitors in BS 2072. The lowest inflow of visitors was observed through Dhangadhi entry point with 21,484 in BS 2071 and 26,779 in BS 2072. One of the reasons for such high number of Indian visitors coming through Belhiya entry point could be its proximity to Lumbini, the birthplace of Lord Buddha.
13. Similarly, the highest number of Indian travelers opted bus as the most popular mode of transportation to visit Nepal with 702,656 travelers followed by 629,480 opting car/jeep/van and 107,450 motorcycle in BS 2071. However, in BS 2072, the highest number of travelers chose car/jeep/van as preferred mode of transportation with 561,955 travelers, followed by 339,136 choosing bus and 120,416 using motorcycle.
14. Both countries are trusted partners in trade and tourism. Nepal carries out more than 60% of its trade and transactions with India. Nepal shares its borders with Indian states of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar and West Bengal where a large number of Hindu population reside and major Buddhist shrines are situated. Nepal is benefited by cross-border Hindu and Buddhist pilgrimages and a large number of Nepali pilgrims also visit religious sites in India every year.

15. Since Nepal and India share prodigious opportunities in developing pilgrimage tourism, a number of theme-based pilgrimage tourism circuits have been recommended. All of these circuits link Hindu and Buddhist destinations in northern India to the destinations in Nepal.
16. Digitization of record keeping has become commonplace and modern methods of digital record keeping are available at reasonable costs. It is however necessary for Government of Nepal to upgrade the system of record keeping at the entry points. This will not only avoid loss of data and records but also enhance the working capacity and level of motivation of the officials at the entry points. During the study it has been observed that such technologies are seldom used to collect and maintain the records of vehicles crossing the borders. Further, the enthusiasm and capacity of human resources in adopting new technologies are also found limited.
17. The survey reveals that in a normal year more than a million Indian visitors travel to Nepal overland. This is almost 10 times higher than the official figures published by Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation. The findings of the survey are very significant in comparison to the perfunctory statistics currently available. Accurate and thoroughly analyzed statistics help frame appropriate policy interventions, devise plans and execute programs. Therefore, it is believed that these axiomatic findings of the survey will be instrumental for both Indian and Nepal governments to further develop and promote religious tourism between the two countries.
18. India and Nepal both are home to the iconic Hindu and Buddhist religious sites which are visited by millions of pilgrims and general visitors every year. As such they embrace pilgrimage tourism for its religious and cultural significance, direct and multiplier effects on employment generation and economic development. Based on the findings of the study and various other reports on pilgrimage tourism, a set of interventions are recommended for maximizing the benefits of pilgrimage tourism by India and Nepal.
19. The empirical findings of the survey are expected to be very useful in developing innovative religious products in Nepal and India. Similarly, these will be equally helpful in realizing the concept of Pashupati-Shiva Circuit connecting Pashupatinath and 12 Jyotirlingas of India, Pashupati Circuit within premises of Pashupatinath in Kathmandu, Buddhist Circuits and Sub-circuits encompassing the sites in Nepal and India which are related to important events in the life of Lord Buddha. Further, Kathmandu valley houses several temples and shrines dedicated to Lord Vishnu, Ganesha and Goddesses of power. These sites of religious significance can be connected to the corresponding shrines in India in a way that pilgrimage to one site lead to complementary visit to the other. Therefore, connecting and promoting these highly revered eclectic religious and cultural sites together serve tourism interest of both countries.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Nepal is renowned for its rich cultural and natural heritages and attracts a large number of international tourists every year. Tourism is one of the major economic sectors that generates income and employment and contributes to the overall Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the nation. According to the latest tourism statistics a total of 538,970 international tourists visited Nepal, spent 497.84 million USD, and contributed 3% of total foreign exchanges in 2015. Due to the devastating earthquake and disturbances in the Terai region the number of visitors declined by 32% in 2015 as compared to the figures of 2014. World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) has estimated that tourism in Nepal creates 426,500 jobs and directly contributes 4% in the national GDP.

In 2015 the average length of stay of the visitors in Nepal was 13.16 days and they spent 68.57 USD per day in Nepal. Per capita income of a Nepali citizen from tourism is 18 USD which is almost at par with per capita income from tourism in India. However, this is 25 times less than that of Thailand, 4 times less than in comparison with Bhutan and 3 times less than in Sri Lanka. Similarly, the ratio of population vis-à-vis total number of visitors is 48:1 in Nepal, 17:1 in Bhutan, 3:1 in Thailand and 7:1 in the global context. Interestingly 7 tourists travel in a space of one square km globally, 44 tourists in Thailand and only 3.6 in Nepal. (*National Tourism Strategy of Nepal 2016-2025*)

According to United Nations World Tourism Organisation, 1.2 billion visitors traveled internationally and generated 12.32 trillion USD in 2015. Generally speaking, Nepal attracts 0.1 percent of the total international arrivals and 5.7 percent of the international tourists who visit South Asia. Similarly, Nepal earns 0.03 percent of the total global income and 1.4 percent of income that is generated in the South Asian region.

India ranks top among the tourist generating source markets and contributes almost one fifth of total tourists visiting Nepal. According to Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation out of 790,118 international visitors, the share of Indian tourists was more than 17% or 135,343 in 2014. However, the international arrivals declined by 32 % and only 75, 124 Indian nationals visited Nepal in 2015. The following table presents total and Indian arrivals in Nepal since 2010.

Table 1: Total, Indian and pilgrimage tourist arrivals to Nepal 2010-2015

Year	Total Arrivals	Indian Arrivals (by air only)	% of Indian Arrivals	Total Number of Pilgrimage Tourists	% of Pilgrimage Tourists
2010	602,867	120,898	20.05	101,335	16.8
2011	736,215	149,504	20.31	63,783	8.7
2012	803,092	165,815	20.65	109,854	13.7
2013	797,616	180,974	22.69	40,678	5.1
2014	790,118	135,343	17.13	98,765	12.5

2015	538,970	74,814	13.88	14,996	2.78
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The pilgrimage segment is the second largest source of arrivals after holiday and leisure segment. The National Tourism Strategic Plan 2016-2025 claims that almost 15% (by air) of arrivals from India, 60% of arrivals from Sri Lanka and 45% of arrivals from Thailand visit Nepal for religious purpose. The official figures released by Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation of Nepal Government state that 12.5% of the total or 98,765 tourists visiting Nepal have come for pilgrimage in 2014. However, the number hit all-time low since 2003 with only 14,996 visitors or less than 3% of the total in 2015. According to these figures a total of 78,680 third country tourists visited Pashupati area and 129,180 third country tourists visited Lumbini, the birth place of Lord Buddha in 2015. Similarly the number of Indian tourists visiting Lumbini was 130,262 in 2015. However, there are no published data available pertaining to the Indian visitors to Pashupatinath area and Janakpurdham area, two major religious attractions in Nepal. As per the conversation with responsible official at Pashupati Area Development Trust over the telephone, the Indian tourists visiting Pashupatinath area is estimated nearly one million per annum.

According to a study, half of all pilgrimages worldwide take place in 250 pilgrimage sites in India alone. For Buddhist pilgrims also India has become a top of the mind destination because of Bodhgaya, Sarnath and Kushinagar. The Buddhist devotees believe that they can attain merit and a noble rebirth by going on pilgrimage to the places where Lord Buddha was born (Lumbini), gained enlightenment (Bodhgaya), first preached (Sarnath), and attained Nirvana (Kushinagar). Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) operates exclusive train for the Buddhist Circuit Tour covering Bodhgaya, Varanasi, Sarnath, Kushinagar in India and Lumbini in Nepal. Pilgrimage travel globally is estimated at a value of US\$18 billion and 300-450 million travelers per annum.

Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation of Nepal Government publishes *Nepal Tourism Statistics* every year in order to disseminate tourism related data. This publication provides data and information on international tourist arrivals to Nepal, income from tourism and movement of international visitors within Nepal. As per immigration rules and regulation of Nepal government, most of the nationals can obtain visa to enter into Nepal upon arrival at the entry points. Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu is the only gateway to enter to Nepal by air but there are seven overland entry points where immigration offices are located. Out of these seven entry points six are located along Indo-Nepal border and only one is located along Sino-Nepal border. The immigration office located along Sino-Nepal border in Kodari has not provided any entry visa to international visitors after the earthquake of April 2015. Data from these immigration offices are the primary source of tourism related statistics.

The long cherished and bonhomie of relations between India and Nepal allow nationals of both the countries to cross the border without any restriction and frontier formality. Therefore, the Indian nationals traveling to Nepal do not require visa to enter to Nepal and the same applies to the Nepali nationals travelling to India. The Immigration Office in Tribhuvan International Airport maintains arrival statistics of Indian nationals entering Nepal by air but there is mechanism to keep record of Indian

visitors entering overland. Although all the third country visitors (tourists from other than India) are required to obtain visa from the immigration offices located in the respective entry points.

Due to the open borders shared by Nepal and India, a large number of Indian nationals enter Nepal also on foot making it very difficult to correctly estimate the volume of tourist traffic. Hence, there are still more tourists from India visiting Nepal overland which are not taken into account by the survey which is part of this study. The purposes of their visit range from business, social, and religious to holiday and leisure.

However, irrespective of these challenges, the survey has essayed to track the volume of Indian nationals entering Nepal on vehicles. Nine major border points have been identified between Nepal and India and the survey has been conducted to estimate the number of Indian nationals by enumerating the Indian vehicles entering Nepal from these points in Bikrum Sambat (BS) 2071 and 2072. These nine points, from west to east of Nepal, are Mahendranagar (Gaddachauki), Dhangadhi (Mohana), Nepalgunj (Jamunaha), Bhairahwa (Belihya), Parsa (Birgunj), Janakpur (Jaleswor and Vittamod), Biratnagar (Jogbani) and Jhapa (Kakarvitta).

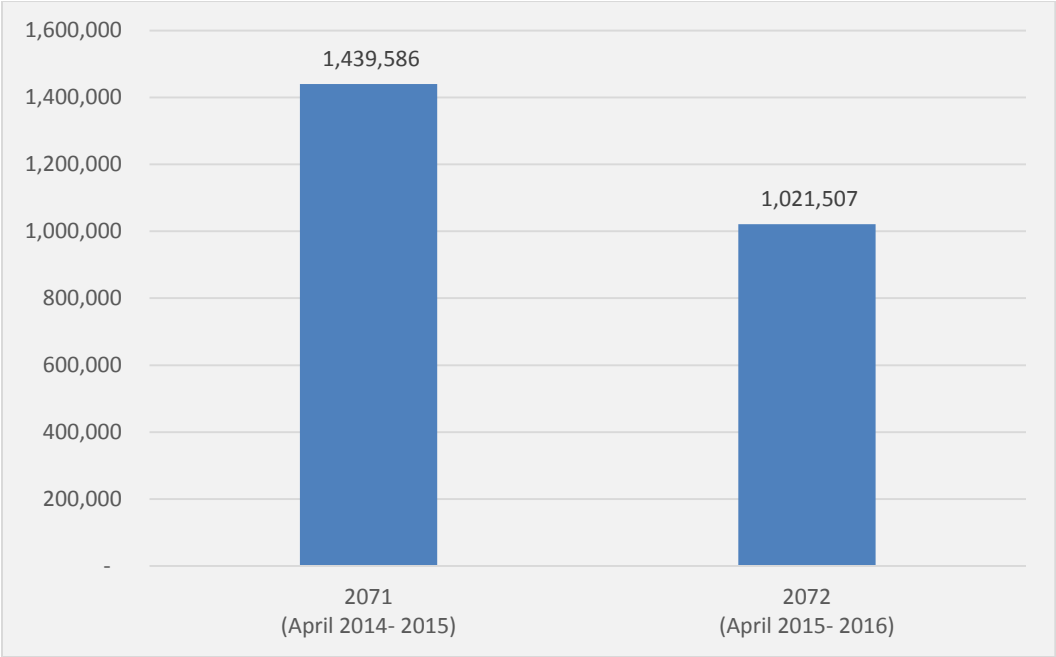


Figure 1: Number of gross Indian tourist overland

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of the study is to explore and assess the true potential of pilgrimage tourism between India and Nepal with a special focus on developing mutual and cross-border flow of Hindu and Buddhist tourists. To find out the accurate number of Indian visitors to Nepal the study has collected the detail records of Indian vehicles entering Nepal through nine checkpoints along Indo-Nepal borders and extrapolated the estimated number of Indian visitors.

While official data on total tourist arrivals in Nepal by air and data of third country tourist arrivals by land are easily available, the data of Indian visitors to Nepal by land are not available. Surveys conducted by Nepal Tourism Board in the past have indicated that volume of such visitors could be more than half a million per annum. Therefore, this study has undertaken a comprehensive survey and estimated the number of Indian nationals who visited Nepal by land through nine entry points in the year BS 2071 and BS 2072. The estimation is based on the monthly vehicular movement records maintained at the nine Custom Offices of Government of Nepal located at the entry points throughout two consecutive years. An average passenger number has been assumed for each category of vehicle that crossed the border points to arrive at an estimate. Since more Indian visitors have propensity of traveling to Nepal overland, it is essential to find out the real size of Indian tourism market in order to assess the true potential of pilgrimage tours from India to Nepal.

The temple of Pashupatinath in Kathmandu is one of the most revered shrines for Hindus from around the world. Similarly Lumbini is the birthplace of Lord Buddha, the fountain of peace and as such one of the most sought after pilgrimage for Buddhist devotees. Furthermore, the ancient seat of King Janak in Janakpur, Muktinath in Jomsom and Halesi Mahadeva in Khotang district of Nepal are considered sacred for Hindus and Buddhists alike.

Although data are difficult to capture, a large number of Nepali pilgrims undertake tours to various sacred Hindu sites in India. Chardham, Haridwar, Varanasi, Prayag, Gaya, Puri, Tirupati, Somnath and Rameshwaram are some the most popular places among Nepali pilgrims. The Maha Khumbh Mela, in India is believed as the largest congregation of humanity with 100 million Hindu pilgrims from around the world.

1.3 Research Methodology

The study has been conducted to assess the volume of Indian visitors to Nepal overland and to explore the potential of pilgrimage tourism in Nepal. The study also seeks to identify the areas of cooperation between India and Nepal in developing and promoting pilgrimage tourism. Relevant literatures on Indo-Nepal tourism have been reviewed, field visits have been organized to the entry points and available secondary data have been collected to draw inference from the survey.

In order to estimate number of the overland Indian visitors to Nepal, which is the pith of the study, the survey collected data available at the Custom offices of Government of Nepal at all the nine entry points along Nepal-India border. The survey was conducted from May 3 to June 3, 2016. Since the Custom Offices maintain the data using official calendar of Nepal i.e. Bikram Sambat (BS), the findings of the date have been presented accordingly. In addition, as BS 2072 (April 16, 2015-April, 15, 2016) witnessed major incidents having pernicious impact on tourism of Nepal, comparison of tourism scenario in BS 2072 with the same period earlier i.e. BS 2071 (April 16, 2014-April, 15, 2015) would depict the magnitude of such impact.

Approximate conversion of Nepali calendar to Gregorian calendar is presented below:

Table 2: Approximate conversion from Nepali to Gregorian calendar

Months According to Nepali Calendar (BS 2071)	Months According to Gregorian calendar	Months According to Nepali Calendar (BS 2072)	Months According to Gregorian calendar
Baishakh	April 16-May 15, 2014	Baishakha	April 16-May 15, 2015
Jestha	May 16-June 15, 2014	Jestha	May 16-June 15, 2015
Ashadh	June 16-July 15, 2014	Ashadh	June 16-July 15, 2015
Shrawan	July 16-August 15, 2014	Shrawan	July 16-August 15, 2015
Bhadra	August 16-September15, 2014	Bhadra	August 16-September 15, 2015
Aaswin or Asoj	September 16-October 15 2014	Aaswin or Asoj	September 16-October 15 2015
Kartik	October 16-November 15, 2014	Kartik	October 16-November 15, 2015
Mangsir	November 16-December 15, 2014	Mangsir	November 16-December 15, 2015
Poush	December 16, 2014-January15, 2015	Poush	December 16, 2014-January 15, 2016
Magh	January 15-February 16, 2015	Magh	January 15-February 16, 2016
Falgun	February 16-March 15, 2015	Falgun	February 16-March 15, 2016
Chaitra	March 16-April 15, 2015	Chaitra	March 16-April 15, 2016

A team of experienced enumerators and data collectors having in-depth knowledge on tourism research was formed which gathered all relevant data from nine Custom Offices located along Indo-Nepal border. Nepal Tourism Board and Department of Customs in Kathmandu have facilitated and the employees of the Custom Offices at all the entry points provided all necessary assistance in the process of data collection.

The team of data collectors visited the Custom Offices at each of the nine entry points. They met the officer in-charge and obtained permission to access their records on the basis of the official letters provided by the Custom Department, Ministry of Finance, in Kathmandu. All the recorded data on the movement of vehicles to Nepal from India was meticulously examined and gathered. Handwritten registers and digital records were referred to while collecting the data. The team recorded the number and the type of Indian vehicles carrying passengers that entered Nepal.

The study also assesses the potential of further developing pilgrimage tourism in Nepal based on the volume of Indian visitors to Nepal. The findings of the study substantiate the possibility of developing

and promoting pilgrimage tourism between India and Nepal. In addition to the survey, the study also reviewed a number of germane researches on this issue, which have explored the potential of religious tourism between India and Nepal as well as identified the stumbling blocks that stymie further progress

1.4 Area of Study

International visitors can enter Nepal either by air or land. Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu is the only international airport in Nepal thus only entry point for the visitors who intend to enter Nepal by air. There are following eight entry points with Immigration Office for the third country visitors who want to enter Nepal overland. Out of eight entry points seven are located along Indo-Nepal border and only one, Kodari, is located along Sino-Nepal border.

- Gaddhachowki (Mahendranaga), Kanchanpur
- Dhangadi, Kailali
- Nepalgunj, Banke
- Belihya, Bhairahwa
- Birgunj, Parsa
- Kakarvitta, Jhapa
- Kodari,(Tatopani) Sindhupalchowk

Indian nationals entering to Nepal do not require fulfilling any frontier formality; they can enter Nepal from any entry point located along the border. However, the following nine major entry points along the Nepal-India border have been chosen which the Indian visitors mostly use to travel to Nepal. Therefore, the survey was conducted in these nine points, from west to east:

- Gaddachauki, Mahendranagar (Kanchanpur, Far Western)
- Dhangadhi (Kailali, Far Western)
- Nepalgunj (Banke, Mid-Western)
- Belihya, Bhairahwa (Rupandehi, Western)
- Birgunj, Parsa (Central)
- Jaleswor, Janakpur (Dhanusha, Central)
- Vittamod, Janakpur (Dhanusha, Central)
- Jogbani, Biratnagar (Morang, Eastern)
- Kakarvitta, Jhapa (Eastern)

The entry points have been plotted on the map below.

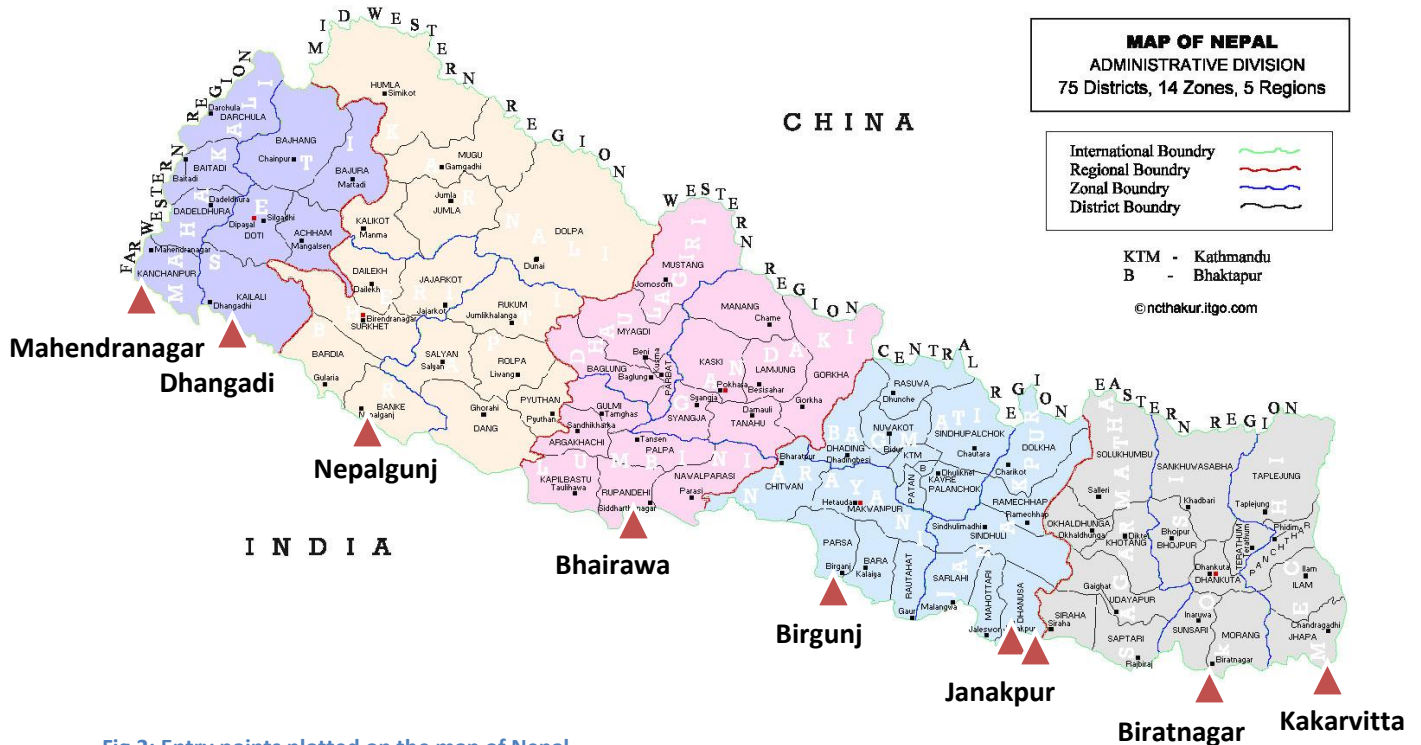


Fig.2: Entry points plotted on the map of Nepal

1.5 Assumptions

In order to draw a reliable and valid inference, the survey has presumed the following assumptions:

- This survey considers only Indian nationals traveling in a vehicle as tourist to estimate and arrive at the total numbers of Indian visitors. The Indian nationals crossing the borders on foot are not included in the data.
- Only those vehicles, which had stayed for longer than 24 hours inside Nepal, have been included in the data.
- The survey assumes that each vehicle was carrying the following number of average passengers:

Table 3: Assumption of average number of passengers in different category of vehicles

S.N.	Type of vehicle	Average no. of passengers
1.	Bus	32
2.	Car/ Jeep/ Van	5
3.	Motorcycle	1

1.6 Limitations

There are many issues that have limited the findings of the survey.

1. The survey results are based on the count of Indian nationals crossing the border on vehicles. However, it was found that many tourists cross the border on foot and then take vehicles once they are on Nepal side. During the study it has been observed that there are considerable number of tourists who travel on tanga or rickshaw through the border. Because of absence of any mechanism to keep record of such commuters, the actual flow might be higher than the data captured by the survey.
2. Another major limitation of the survey is the porous border between India and Nepal. Besides the nine entry points covered by this survey, many Indian visitors enter Nepal through other entry points also, such as:
 - Krishnanagar, Kapilvastu
 - Gulariya, Bardiya
 - Pashupatinagar, Ilam
 - Koilabas, Dang
3. The study does not discuss **the purpose of visit** of the travelers, as the findings of the survey are based only on count of vehicles. Indian visitors travel to Nepal for various purposes. The purposes could be varied such as pilgrimage, holiday and leisure, adventure, shopping, business, VFR (visiting friends and relatives), education etc.
4. All the foreigners who enter Nepal overland through Indo-Nepal borders on vehicles may not be Indian nationals. Many foreign nationals also enter Nepal on vehicles bearing Indian number plate through the entry points having immigration offices on both sides of the border. As the records are based on the number of vehicles entering Nepal without checking the nationalities of travelers in the vehicles, the data thus recorded may not represent the actual scenario. Therefore, net Indian visitors entering to Nepal is arrived by deducting the total number of third country visitors by land in the survey period.
5. The record books at the Custom Offices record only the vehicle count and not the number of passengers the vehicle is carrying. The estimate has been arrived at by **assuming the average number of passengers** carried by each type of vehicle.
6. **Most of the records** in registers at the Custom Offices **were self-entered** by the vehicle drivers or passengers. Often, these records were illegible. There is possibility of error in deciphering such records.
7. This survey was based on the Nepali calendar Bikrum Sambat (BS). According to Nepali calendar, a year begins from Baishakh 1, roughly around April 15 of Gregorian calendar. One of the purposes of conducting the survey according to Bikrum Sambat is to capture the impact of the earthquake and political disturbances in Terai on the overland Indian visitors to Nepal. While the Custom Offices operate according to Nepal government's fiscal year which starts from Shrawan 1, roughly around July 16 of Gregorian Calendar. When data collectors reached the Custom Offices; registers belonging to the last fiscal year had already been closed and stored. Hence, it was extremely difficult to access the needed records.

8. The **records** of vehicles entering Nepal from India **had not been properly maintained** at the Custom Offices. Some registers were found missing so statistical methods are used to project the missing data.

Thus, the findings of this survey should be considered an estimation of the number of Indian visitors travelling to Nepal by land routes.

Chapter-2

Survey of Indian Visitors by Land in BS 2071 and BS 2072

2.1 Statistical Findings of the Survey

This chapter presents findings of the survey of Indian visitors by band in BS 2071 (April 16, 2014-April 15, 2015) and BS 2072 (April 16, 2015 to April 15, 2016). The findings illustrate number of vehicles registered by type at nine border points by the Custom Office, Ministry of Finance of Nepal Government. The number of vehicles of each category is then multiplied by average number of passengers to calculate total number of passengers.

The findings of the survey, especially of that in BS 2072 were highly susceptible to the unfortunate events namely earthquake and disturbances in Terai region of Nepal. Nepal was hit by devastating earthquake, magnitude of 7.8 on Richter scale, in the month of Baishakh 2072 i.e. April 25, 2015. Unrest in Terai region started from the middle of year BS 2072. Subsequent to the earthquake and disorders in Terai, commensurate with the overall economic and social affairs of the country, the number of visitors to Nepal also plummeted. Therefore, the periods of Baiskha and Jestha in 2072 (April 15 to June 15) and Bhadra onwards in BS 2072 (August-September, 2015 onwards) witnessed sharp decline in visitors' arrivals, mainly due to the earthquake, political disorders and fuel crisis in the country.

Statistical findings of the survey of Indian visitors overland in BS 2071 and BS 2072 from the nine major entry points: from the westernmost entry point to the easternmost entry point along Indo-Nepal border are presented below.

2.1.1 Gaddhachowki, Mahendranagar

Mahendranagar is a town in the Far-Western region of Nepal. Banbasa, in the state of Uttarakhand, India is on the other side of Gaddhachowki, Mahendranagar entry point. Mahendranagar is the nearest place in Nepal from New Delhi, capital of India. It is well connected to other parts of Nepal by road network.

The survey reveals that a total of 12,774 vehicles entered Nepal through Mahendranagar entry point in BS 2071. Out of these, 208 were buses, 6,272 cars/jeeps/vans and 6,294 were motorcycles.

In BS 2072, the total number of vehicles that entered Nepal from India was 14,566. Out of these, 509 were buses, 6,513 cars/jeeps/vans and 7,544 were motorcycles.

Table 4: Breakdown of vehicles by type recorded at Mahendranagar entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

S.N.	Type of vehicles	No. of vehicle (BS 2071)	No. of vehicle (BS 2072)
1	Motorcycle	6,294	7,544

2	Car/Jeep/Van	6,272	6,513
3	Bus	208	509
	Total	12,774	14,566

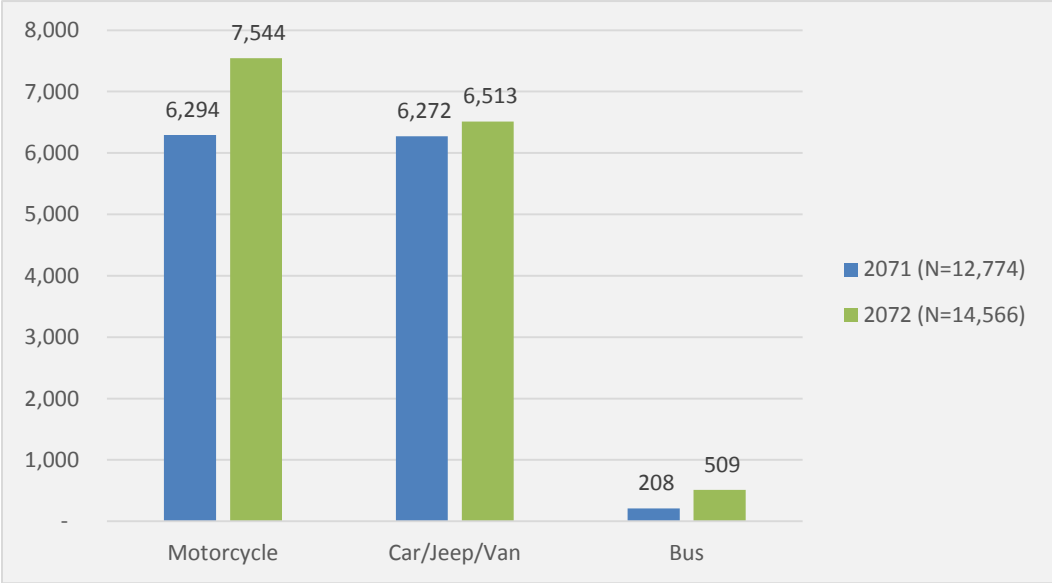


Figure 3: Number of vehicle entries recorded at Mahendranagar entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

Comparing the number of vehicle that entered Nepal through Mahendranagar entry point, it is clear that the number has increased in BS 2072 by 12 percent. The rise was significant in case of motorcycles and buses.

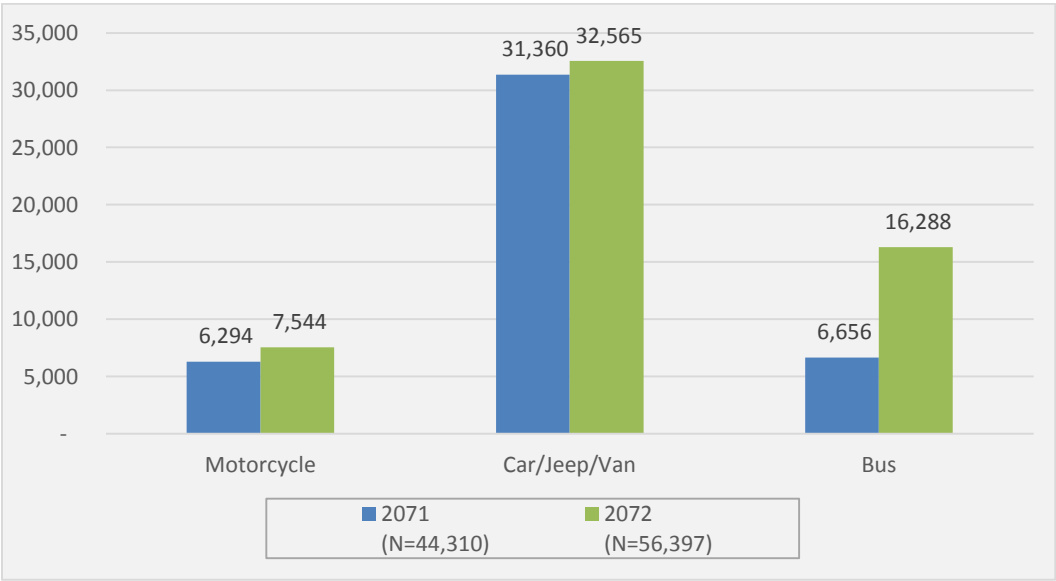


Figure4: Number of travelers recorded at Mahendranagar entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

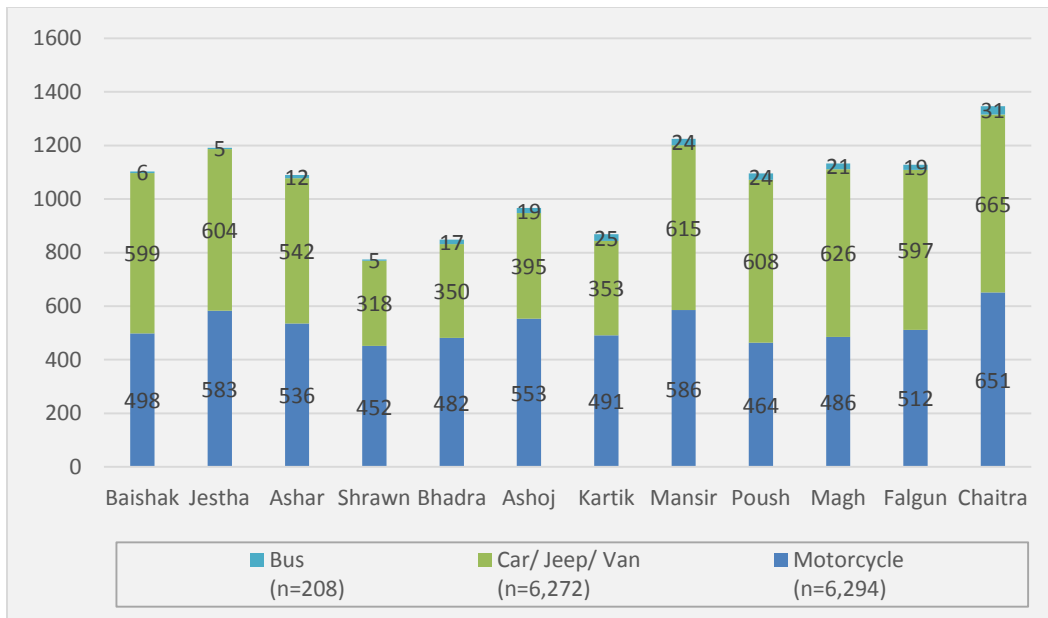


Figure 5: Monthly breakdown of entries of vehicle recorded at Mahendranagar entry point in BS 2071

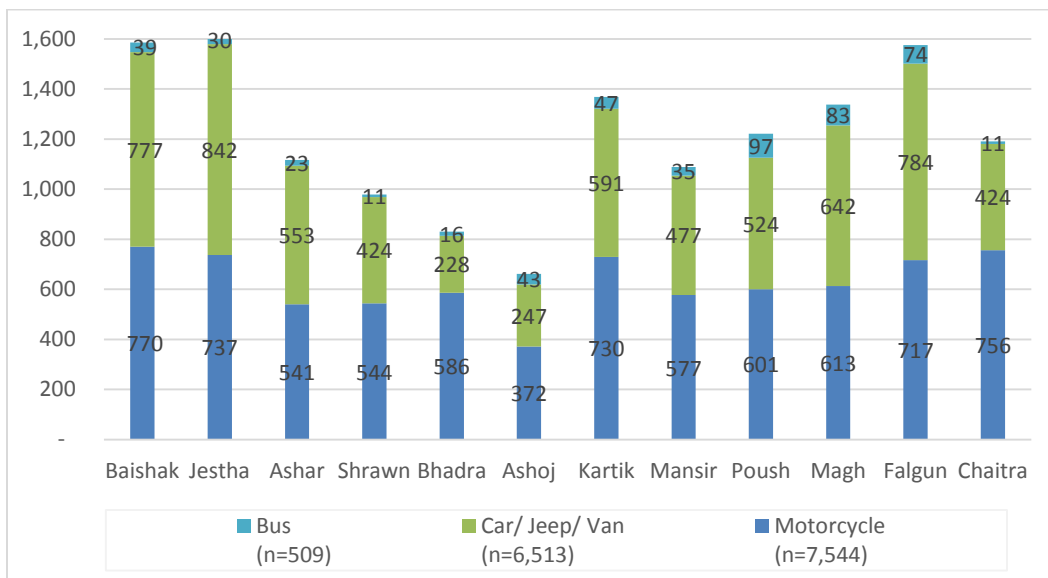


Figure 6: Monthly breakdown of entries of vehicle recorded at Mahendranagar entry point in BS 2072

Figures 4 and 5 illustrate the number of vehicles entering through Mahendranagar during the twelve months of BS 2071 and BS 2072. Though overall number of vehicles entering Nepal from Mahendranagar entry point increased in BS 2072, during the months of Bhandra, the volume of vehicles entry had started to drop and during the month of Ashoj, there was a drastic fall in the number of vehicles. However, during the following month of Kartik in BS 2072, there was a remarkable increase in vehicle entry compared to BS 2071. The number of vehicle entries continued to increase till the month of Falgun in BS 2072.

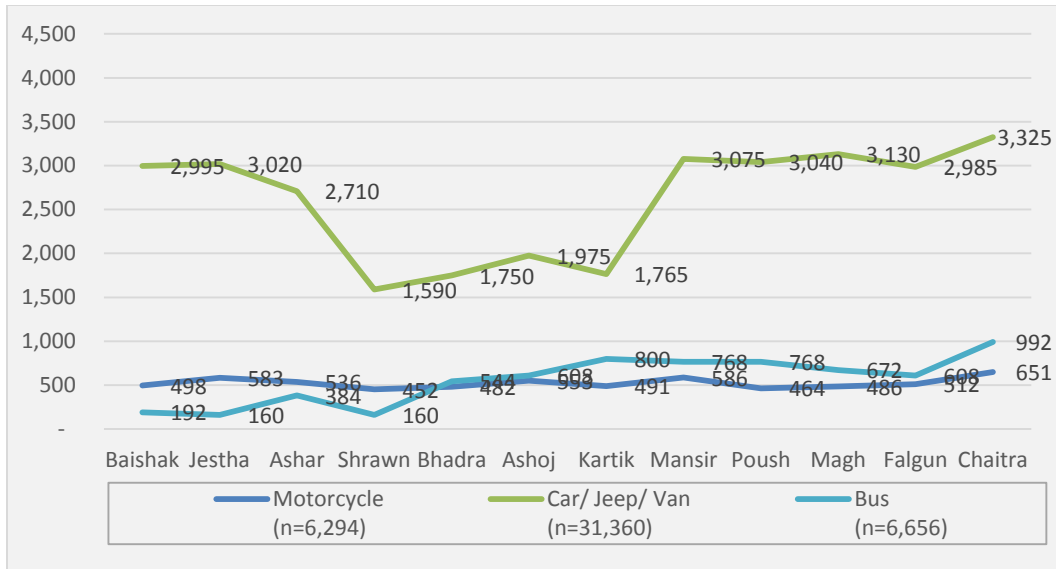


Figure 7: Monthly breakdown of travelers through Mahendranagar by vehicle used in 2071

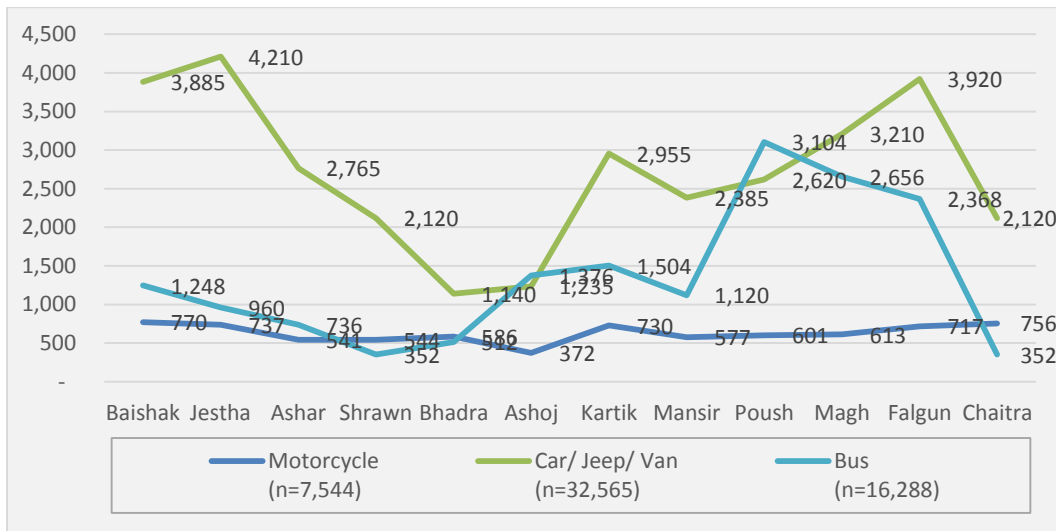


Figure 8: Monthly breakdown of travelers through Mahendranagar by vehicle used in BS 2072

Similarly, Figures 6 and 7 above show the flow of Indian travelers in BS 2071 and 2072.

A total of 44,310 travelers crossed Mahendranagar border using different types of transportation in BS 2071. The majority, 71 percent of travelers used cars/jeeps/vans, 15 percent travelers used buses and 14 percent used motorcycles. In BS 2072, though the percentage of travelers was almost the same as in BS 2071, 58 percent traveled by cars/jeeps/vans whereas 29 percent used buses. The number of people travelling by bus was almost double in BS 2072 in comparison to BS 2071.

2.1.2 Dhangadi, Kailali

Dhangadi is a city in the Far-Western region of Nepal and shares the border with Uttar Pradesh state, India near the village of Gauriphanta. It is well connected to the major cities of Nepal by road and to Kathmandu by air.

The findings of the survey show that in BS 2071, a total 6,374 of vehicles entered Nepal. There were 2,691 motorcycles, 3,669 cars/jeeps/vans and 14 buses. On the other hand, there were 3,629 motorcycles, 4,532 cars/jeeps/vans and 15 buses that entered from India to Nepal in BS 2072. The total number of vehicles in BS 2072 was 8,176.

Table 5: Breakdown of vehicles by type recorded at Dhangadi entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

S.N.	Type of vehicles	No. of vehicle (BS 2071)	No. of vehicle (BS 2072)
1	Motorcycle	2,691	3,629
2	Car/Jeep/Van	3,669	4,532
3	Bus	14	15
	Total	6,374	8,176

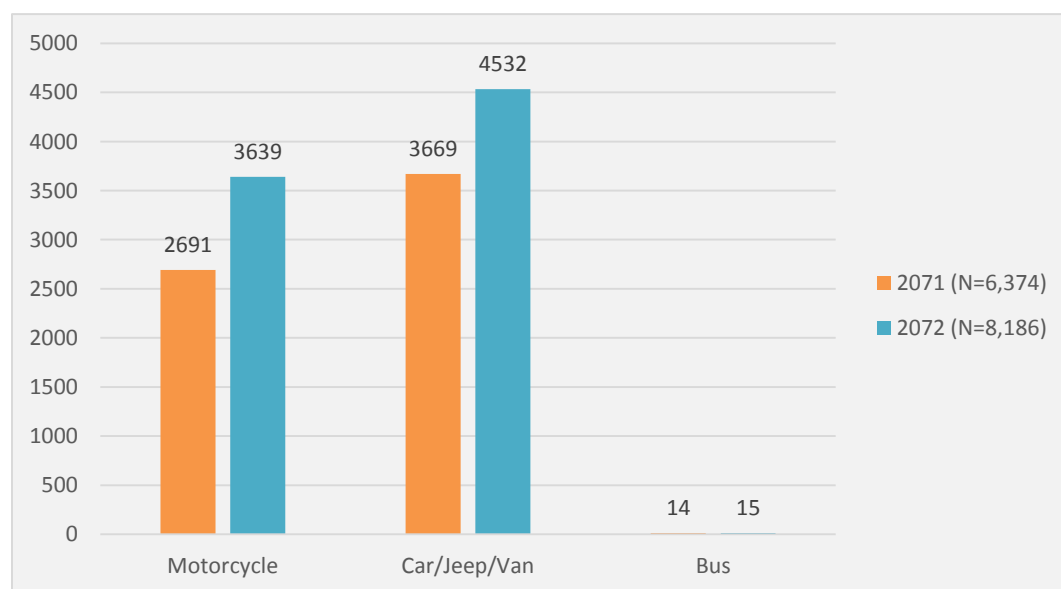


Figure 9: Number of vehicle entries recorded at Dhangadi entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

While comparing vehicle inflow in BS 2071 and BS 2072, it seems that the political turmoil in Terai did not affect the inflow of Indian visitors substantially. The number of motorcycles increased by 26% and cars/jeeps/vans increased by 19% in BS 2072 in comparison to BS 2071.

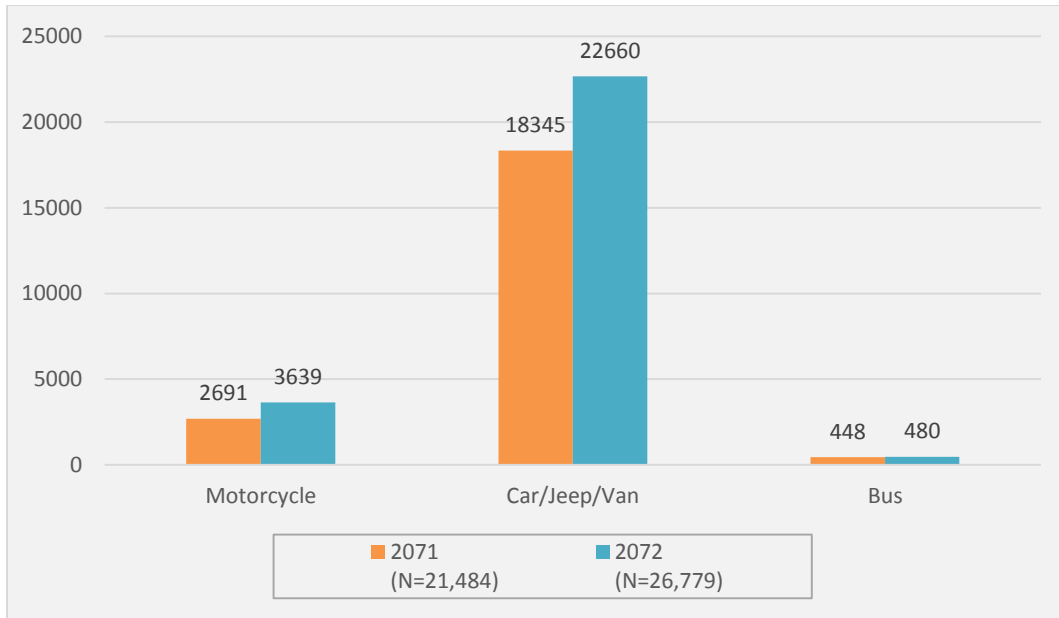


Figure 10: Number of travelers recorded at Dhangadi entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

In line with the inflow of the vehicles, the number of travelers increased by 19% in 2072 compared to 2071. The increase was mainly due to the increase in the inflow of car/van/jeep category.

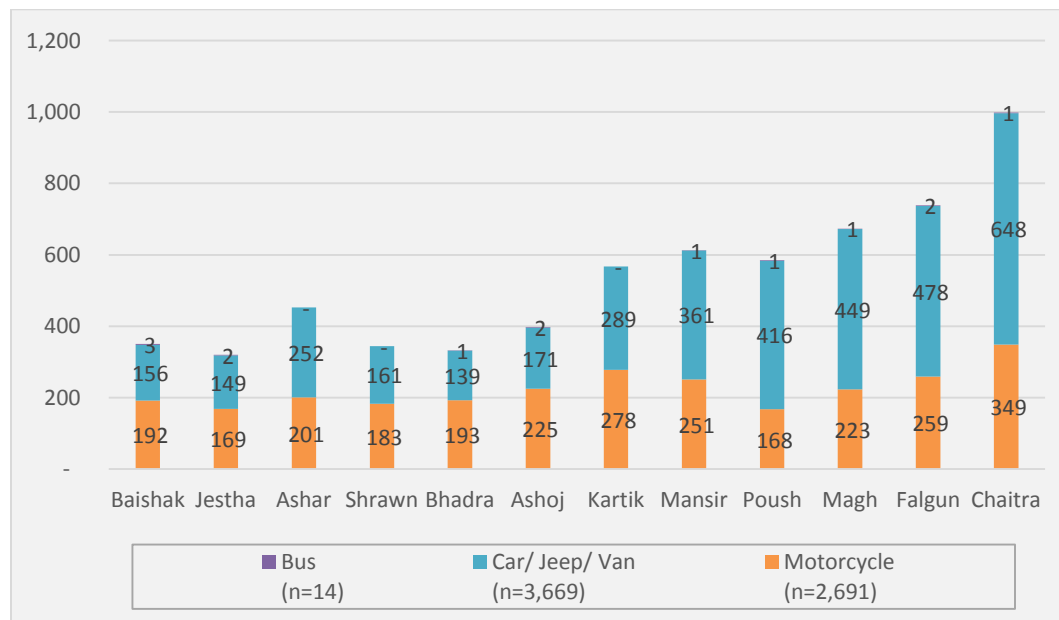


Figure 21: Monthly breakdown of entries of vehicle recorded at Dhangadi entry point in BS 2071

BS 2071 showed a constant increasing trend of inflow of the vehicles starting from the month of Baishakh. However, there were not many buses that entered from Dhangadi entry point this year.

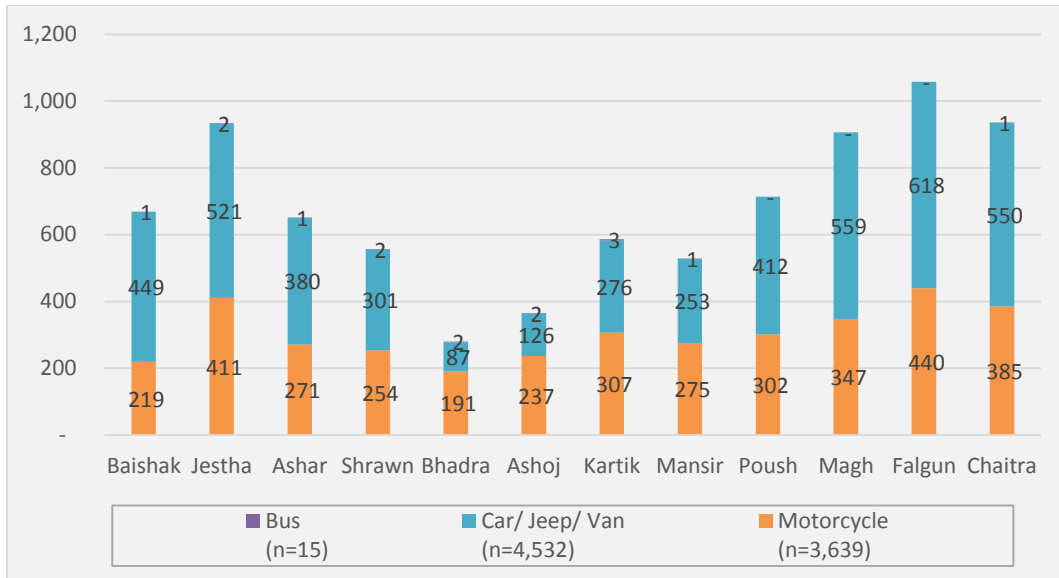


Figure 32: Monthly breakdown of entries of vehicle recorded at Dhangadi entry point in BS 2072

The first four months of BS 2072, showed an increase in the inflow of vehicles in all the three categories, however, the inflow of the vehicles dropped in the month of Bhadra. Ashoj also witnessed the same trend as in BS 2071 and from then onwards, the vehicle inflow constantly increased till the month of Falgun.

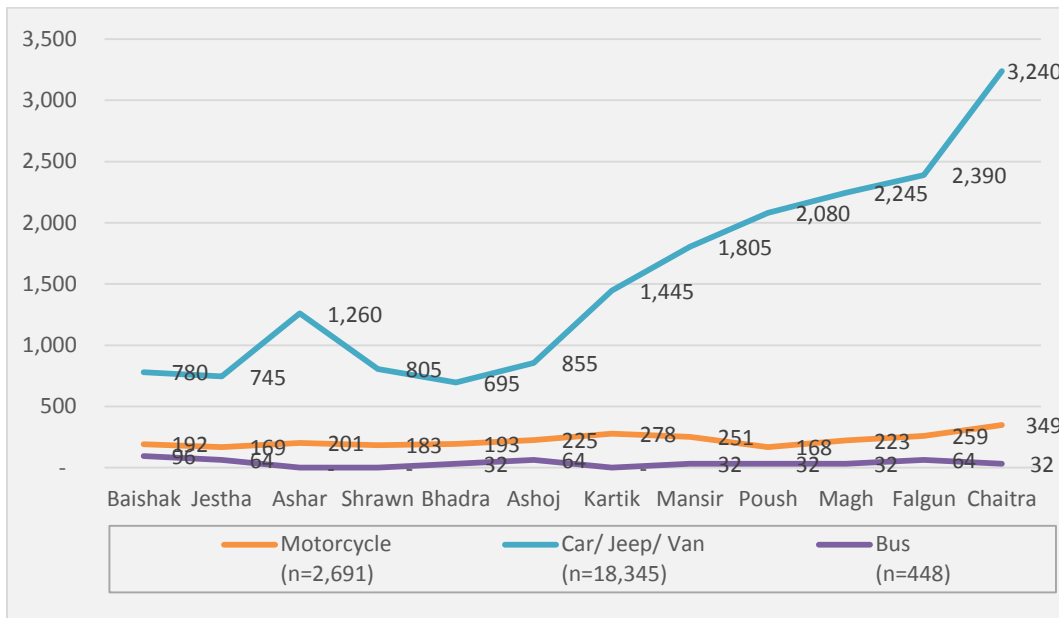


Figure 43: Monthly breakdown of travelers through Dhangadi by vehicle used in BS 2071

The number of Indian travelers entering Nepal from Dhangadi entry point was the highest in the month of Chaitra. Indian travelers mostly used cars/jeeps/vans during the month to enter Nepal. The above Figure shows the increase in the number of Indian travelers by cars/jeeps/vans every month except for the month of Ashar.

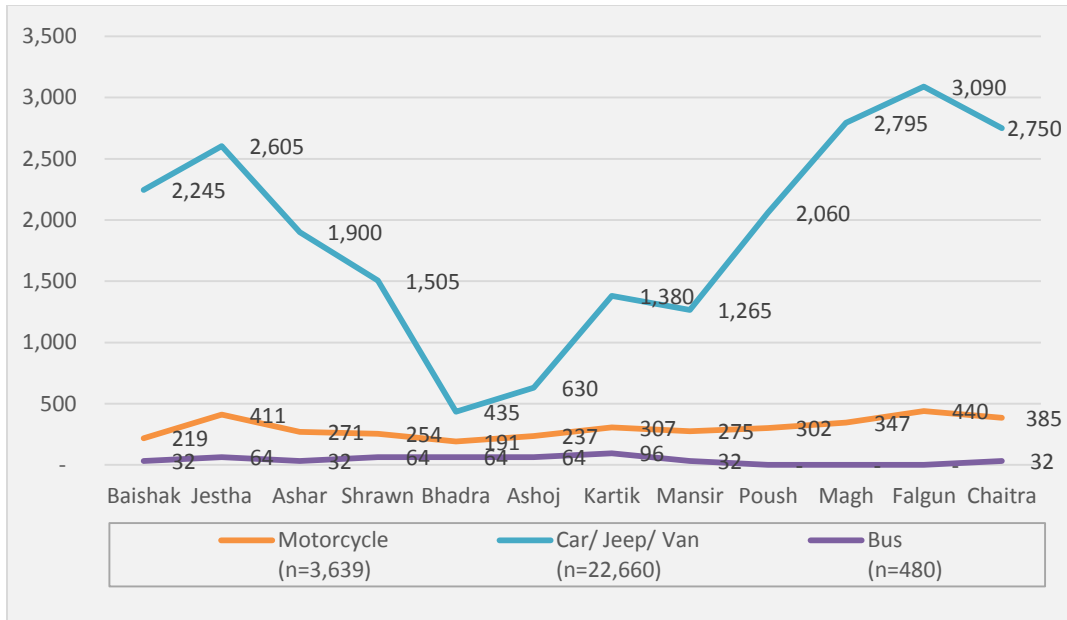


Figure 54: Monthly breakdown of travelers through Dhangadi by vehicle used in BS 2072

In BS 2072, the inflow of Indian visitors entering Nepal from Dhangadi was irregular compared to the numbers in BS 2071. There was a drop in the number of visitors during the month of Bhadra, probably due to the political disturbances in Terai. The number of visitors was particularly high during the month of Falgun.

2.1.3 Nepalgunj, Banke

Nepalgunj is the largest city in the Mid-Western Region of Nepal on the plains of Terai, near Bahraich district of India. The Bahraich-Nepalgunj border is the closest to Lucknow and is a convenient entry point for Indian visitors who intend to enter Nepal by bus or train from the state of Uttar Pradesh and New Delhi. Airport in Nepalgunj offers regular flights to Kathmandu and other parts of Mid-Western Nepal. The city is also well connected to major hubs in Nepal by a network of roads.

The survey reveals that 15,454 different types of passenger vehicles entered Nepal through Nepalgunj border in BS 2071 whereas in BS 2072 the number increased to 19,184. Among these vehicles, there were 7,095 motorcycles, 7,864 cars/jeeps/vans and 495 buses in BS 2071. In 2072 the number of motorcycles increased to 9,769, number of cars/jeeps/vans to 8921 and the number of buses decreased to 494.

The total number of Indian travelers in BS 2071 was 62,255 and in 2072 the number went up to 70,182.

Table 6: Breakdown of vehicles by type recorded at Nepalgunj entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

S.N.	Type of vehicles	No. of vehicle (BS 2071)	No. of vehicle (BS 2072)
1	Motorcycle	7,095	9,769
2	Car/Jeep/Van	7,864	8,921
3	Bus	495	494
	Total	15,454	19,184

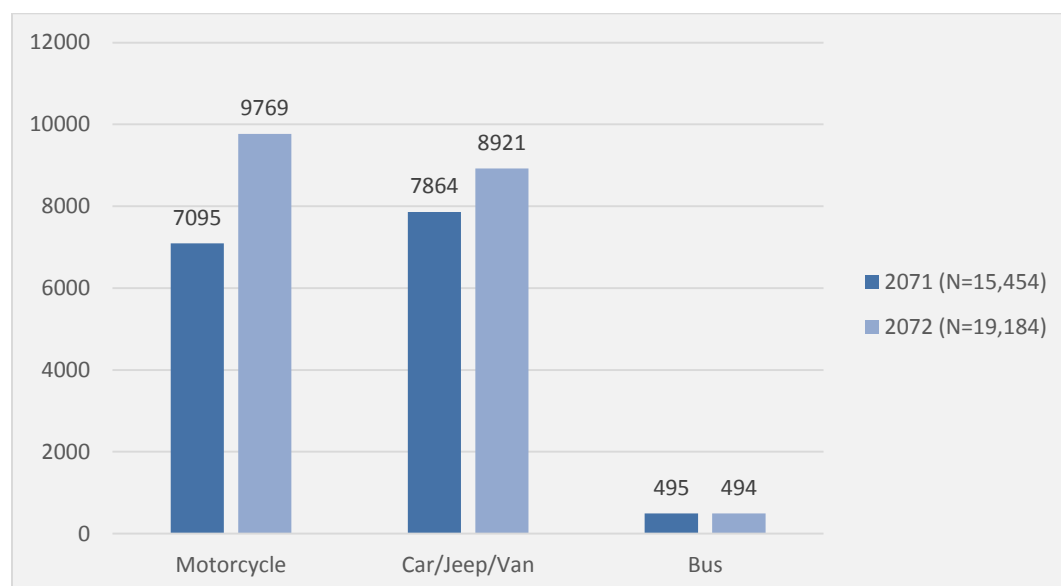


Figure 65: Number of vehicle entries recorded at Nepalgunj entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

In BS 2071, the flow of motorcycles and cars/jeeps/vans was lower as compared to the year BS 2072. The number of buses, however, was higher in BS 2071 than in BS 2072 by a small margin.

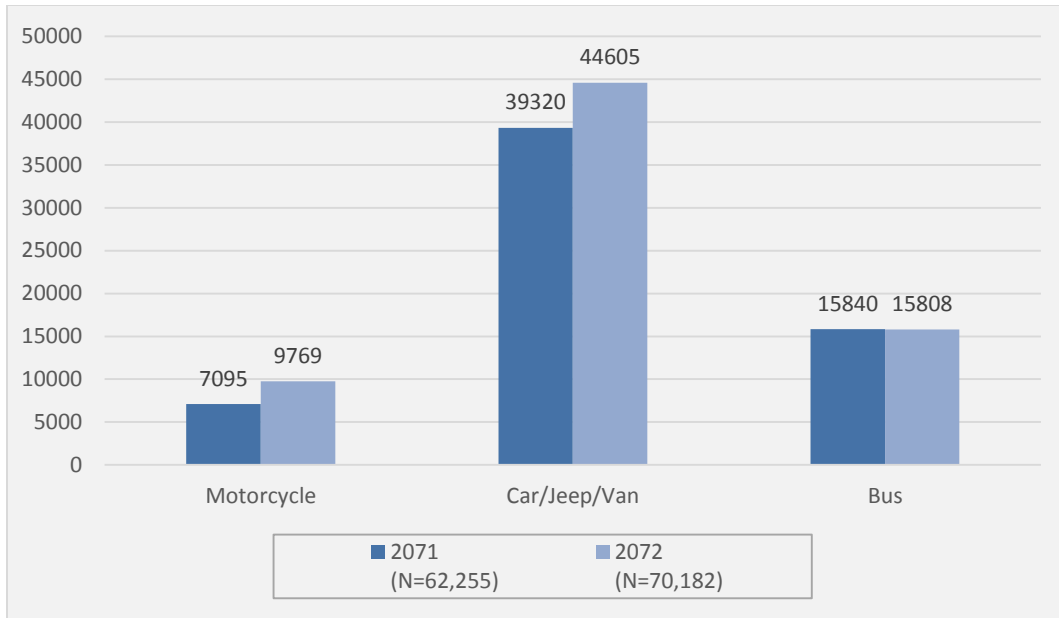


Figure 76: Number of travelers recorded at Nepalgunj entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

The number of Indian travelers also follows the similar pattern. The number of travelers in motorcycles and cars/jeeps/vans augmented in BS 2071 whereas the number of travelers on buses plunged in BS 2072 than the previous year.

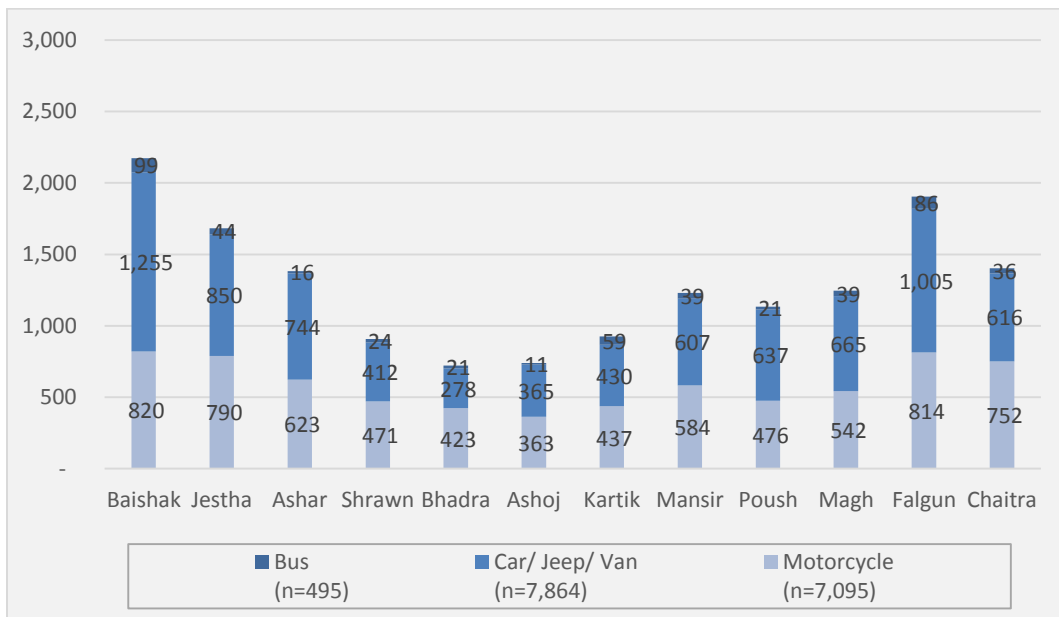


Figure 87: Monthly breakdown of entries of vehicle recorded at Nepalgunj entry point in BS 2071

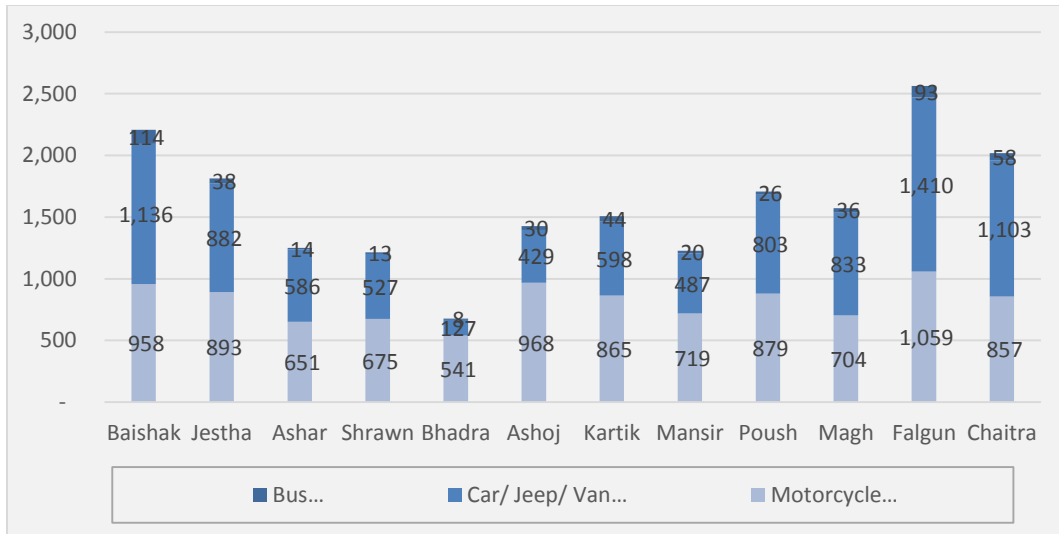


Figure 98: Monthly breakdown of entries of vehicle recorded at Nepalgunj entry point in BS 2072

In BS 2071, the inflow of the vehicles accelerated in Baishakh, Jestha and then again in Falgun. The numbers were low in the period of Shrawan to Kartik. In BS 2072, the inflow chart was consistent except in the months of Ashar and Bhadra, where the number of visitors drops considerably lower than in the other months.

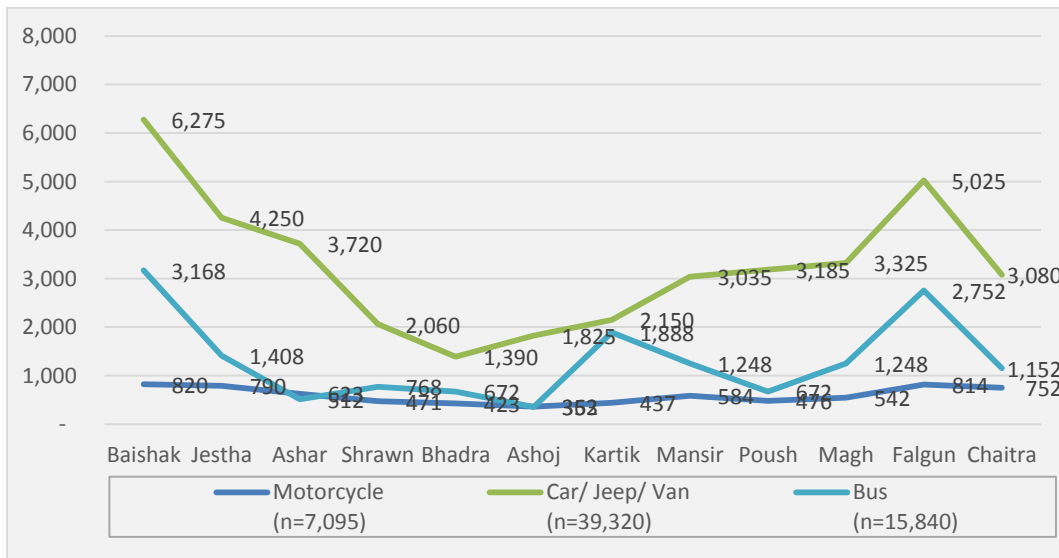


Figure 109: Monthly breakdown of travelers through Nepalgunj by vehicle used in 2071

The survey shows that the flow of motorcycles was consistent throughout BS 2071. The number of Indian travelers travelling into Nepal in buses fluctuates heavily from the range of 3,000 in Baishakh to less than 1,000 in the months of Ashar, Shrawan, Bhadra and Ashoj. It soars in Kartik and Mangshir, and again in Falgun but drops in Poush and Chaitra. The travelers in cars/jeeps/vans varied in numbers with their concentration highest in Baishakh and then stooping through the months till Bhadra where it hit the lowest at 1,390 and started to rise again to 5,025 in Falgun and then again dropping to 3,080 in Chaitra.

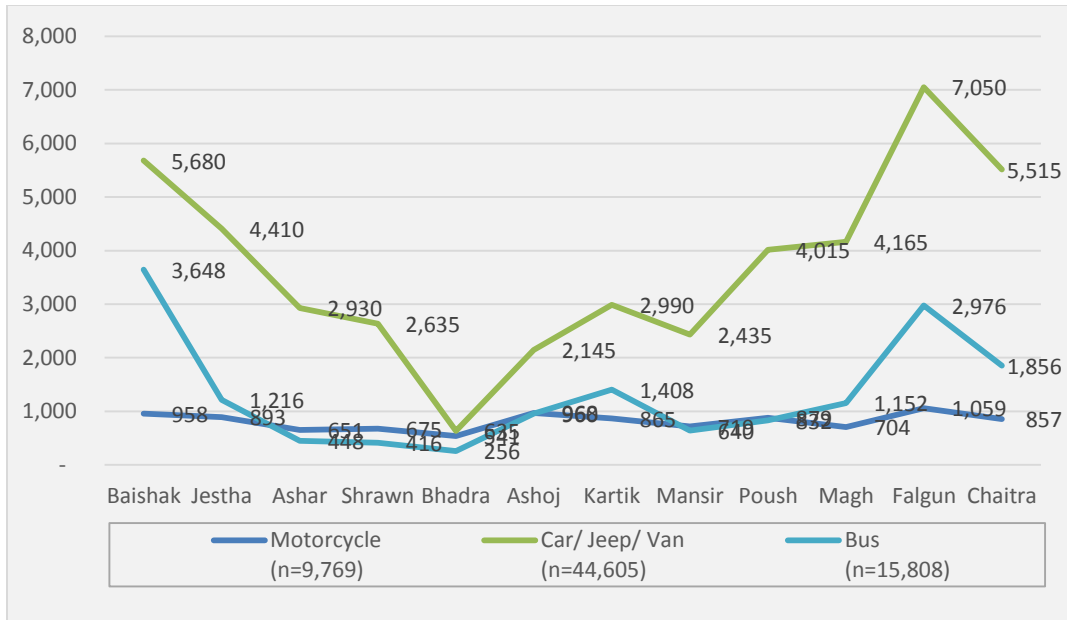


Figure 20: Monthly breakdown of travelers through Nepalgunj by vehicle used in BS 2072

The year BS 2072, which might be considered as an eventful year in current history of Nepal, saw inconsistency in the flow of the Indian travelers as well. The travelers on motorcycles depicted more consistent flow pattern. The number of Indian travelers on buses fell from 3,648 in Baishak to the lowest at 256 in Bhadra and then went up again before reaching 2,876 in Falgun and again dropping to 1,856 in Chaitra. Similarly, the Indian travelers on cars/jeeps/vans decreased from 5,680 in Baishak to mere 675 in Bhadra and then slowly started to rise to 7,000 in Falgun and then dropped to 5,515 in Chaitra.

2.1.4 Belhiya, Bhairahwa

Bhairahwa is one of the major cities on the Terai plains of Western Nepal. It lies at a distance of over 265 km to the west of the capital, Kathmandu, and is contiguous to Indian border at Sunauli. The entry point, Belhiya is the main travel gateway to major sites of Buddhist Circuit, Lumbini and Kapilvastu. Therefore, Belhiya is considered a vital entry point for Indian tourists and Buddhist pilgrims.

Thus, it was not much of a surprise when the survey revealed that there is a very high concentration of flow of travelers and vehicles to Nepal through this s entry point in Bhairahwa. Especially in BS 2071, there were 24,783 motorcycles, 22,579 cars/jeeps/vans and 18,163 buses that entered Nepal. This resulted in the number of Indian overland travelers to 7, 18,984. In 2072 the number of motorcycles was 17,769, that of cars/jeeps/vans was 10,299 and the number of buses was 7,987. The number of Indian travelers in 2072 amounted to 3,24,848.

Table 7: Breakdown of vehicles by type recorded at Bhairahwa entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

S.N.	Type of vehicles	No. of vehicle (2071)	No. of vehicle (2072)
1	Motorcycles	24,783	17,769
2	Cars/Jeeps/Vans	22,597	10,299
3	Buses	18,163	7,987
	Total	65,543	36,055

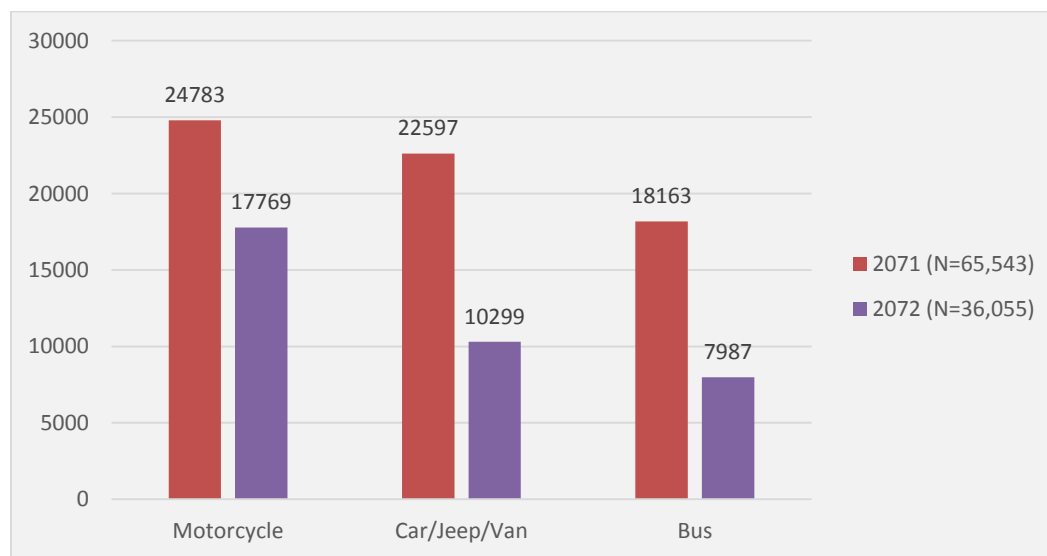


Figure 111: Number of vehicle entries recorded at Bhairahwa entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

The difference in the total numbers of vehicles that entered Nepal through Belhiya entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072 is remarkable. The number of motorcycle decreased from 24,783 in 2071 to 17,769 in 2072; car/jeep/van from 22,597 to 10,299 and bus declined from 18,163 to 7,987 in 2071 and 2072 respectively. The impact of political disturbances was clearly reflected in the numbers.

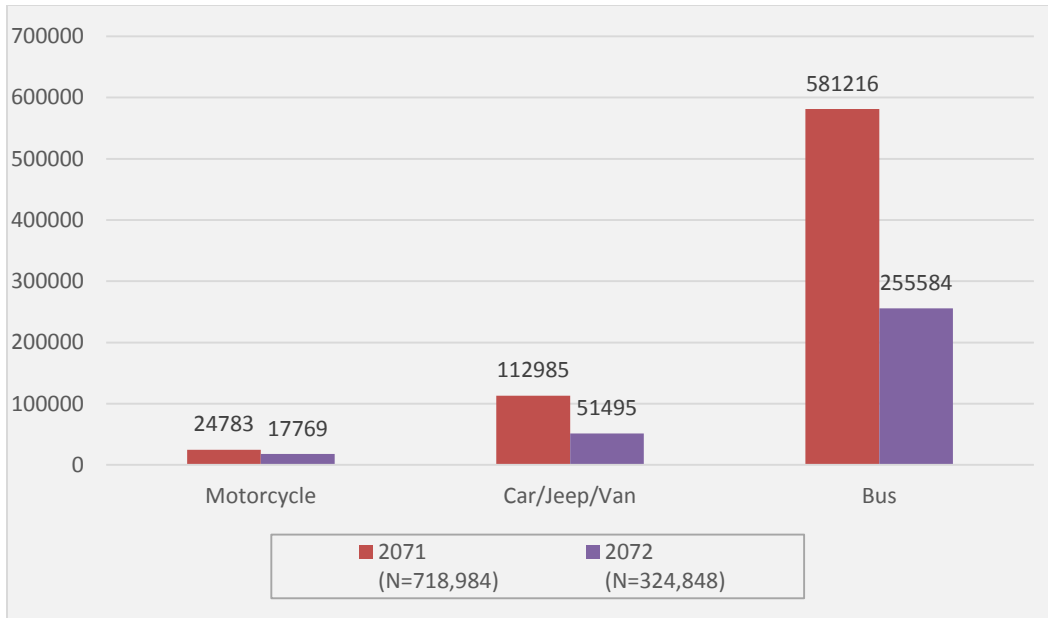


Figure 122: Number of travelers recorded at Bhairahwa entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

Alongside the number of vehicles, the number of travelers also suffered considerably in BS 2072 when compared to BS 2071. The total number of travelers plummeted from 718,984 in 2071 to 324,848 in 2072.

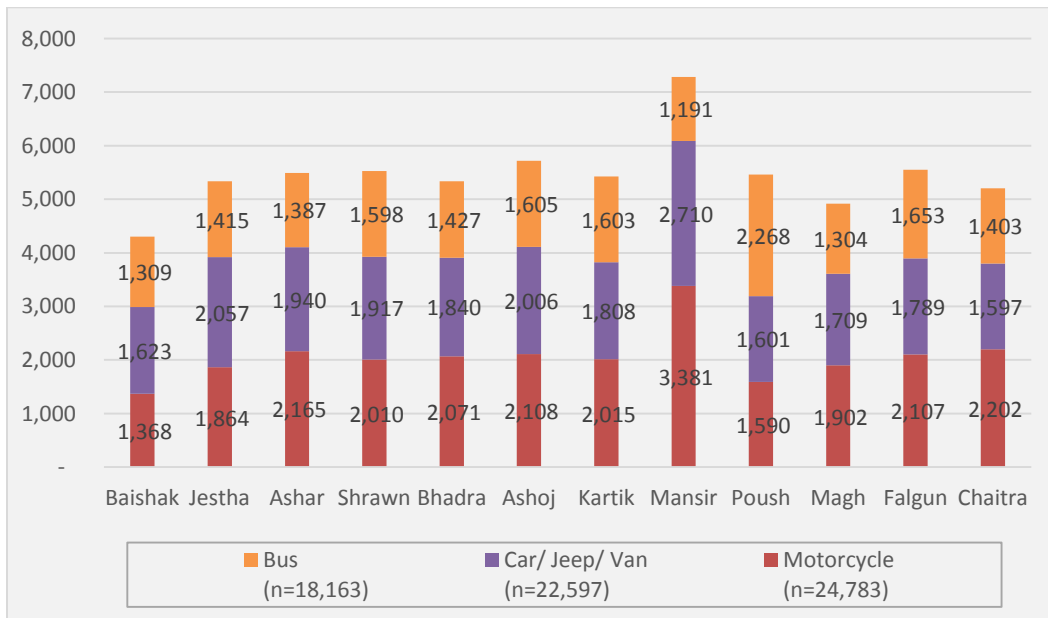


Figure 133: Monthly breakdown of entries of vehicle recorded at Bhairahwa entry point in BS 2071

The survey shows that inflow of vehicles throughout BS 2071 was consistent except in the month of Mansir where the number of vehicles accelerated to 7,282. A total number of 65,543 vehicles entered Nepal from India in BS 2071.

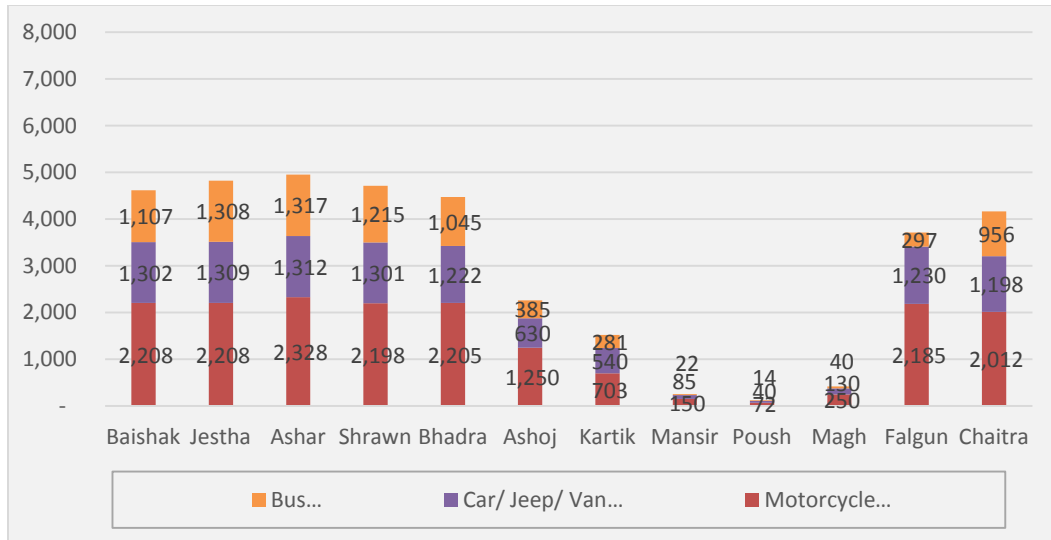


Figure 144: Monthly breakdown of entries of vehicle recorded at Bhairahwa entry point in BS 2072

The year 2072 saw a considerable decline in the number of vehicles that entered Nepal. The political unrest that lasted few months took its toll in terms of inflow of vehicles as well. Where the inflow of vehicles did not suffer much due to the earthquake, presumably due to the large number of arrival of vehicles carrying relief materials from India, the disturbances in Terai rendered a severe blow to the tourism in Nepal. Only 36,055 vehicles came to Nepal from India with its lowest concentration in the months of Mansir, Poush and Magh.

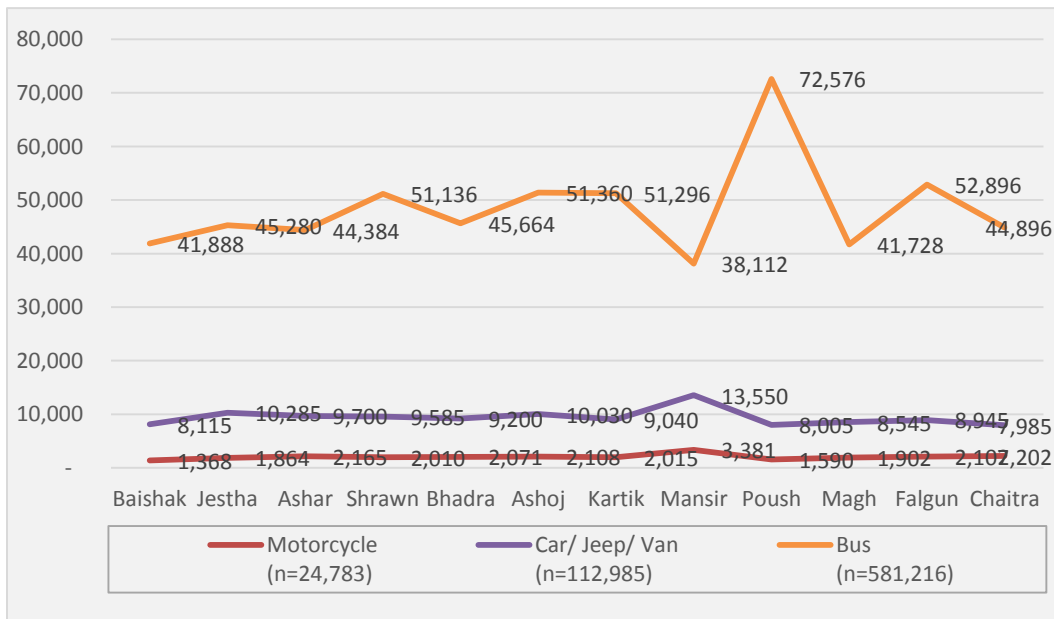


Figure 155: Monthly breakdown of travelers through Bhairahwa by vehicle used in 2071

The figures in BS 2071 shows that there was a consistent flow of travelers using motorcycles and cars/jeeps/vans throughout the months with 24,783 motorcycles and 112,985 of cars/jeeps/vans that entered Nepal. The number of travelers in buses however fluctuated from 41,888 in Baishakh to 72,576

in Poush and then again to 44,896 in Chaitra. The total number of travelers in buses to enter Nepal was recorded at 581,216 in 2071.

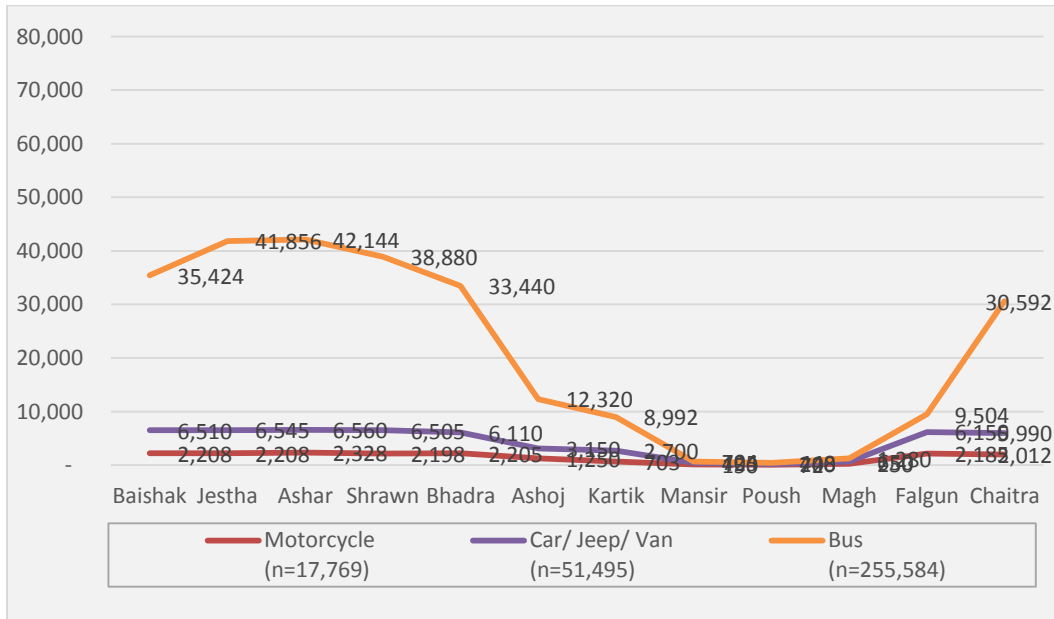


Figure 166: Monthly breakdown of travelers through Bhairahwa by vehicle used in BS 2072

In the year BS 2072, the inflow of travelers on motorcycles and cars/jeeps/vans remained constant throughout the year as similar to the previous year but the number of travelers on buses decreased alarmingly in the months of Manshir, Poush and Magh. This is due to the political unrest that affected the flow during that particular time period. The total number of travelers on buses was highest of the three with 255,584 followed by 51,495 travelers on cars/jeeps/vans and 17,769 on motorcycles.

2.1.5 Birgunj, Parsa

Birgunj is a sub-metropolitan city in southern parts of Central region in Nepal, adjoining the Indian town of Raxaul. Birgunj is an important hub for industrial and economic activities in Nepal and is the busiest gateway for importing goods into Nepal from India and overseas. It is used by travelers from Patna, Kolkata and other nearby Indian cities to enter Nepal.

The survey concludes that there were 15,101 motorcycles, 25,905 cars/jeeps/vans and 1,754 buses that entered Nepal through Birgunj entry point in BS 2071. In BS 2072, the numbers of vehicles declined to 11,745 motorcycles, 10,670 cars/jeeps/vans and 685 buses.

Table 8: Breakdown of vehicles by type recorded at Birgunj entry point in BS 2071 and

S.N.	Type of vehicles	No. of vehicle (BS 2071)	No. of vehicle (BS 2072)
1	Motorcycles	15,101	11,745
2	Cars/Jeeps/Vans	25,905	10,670
3	Buses	1,754	685
	Total	42,760	23,100

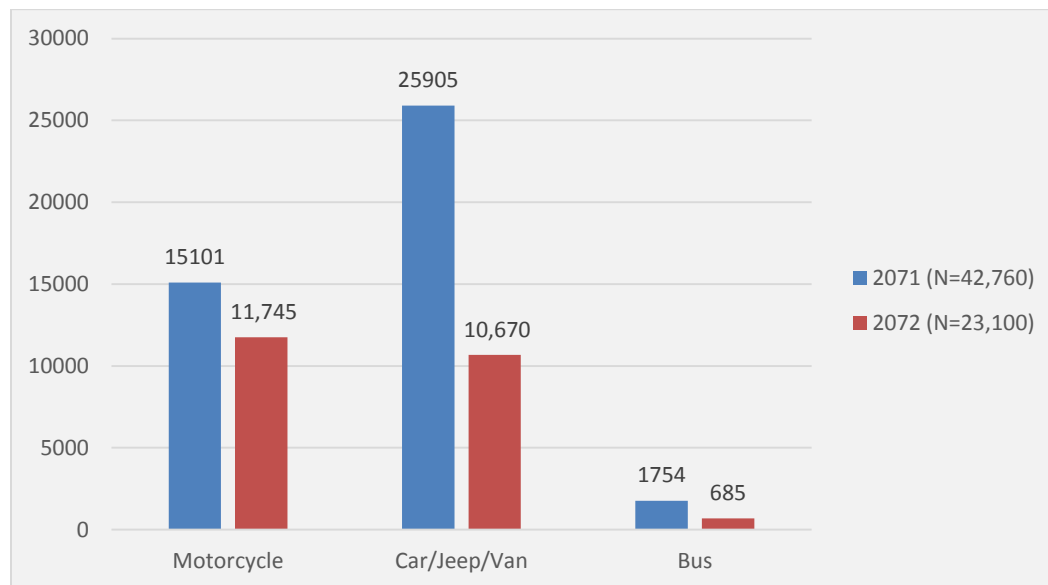


Figure 177: Number of vehicle entries recorded at Birgunj entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

BS 2072 was not favorable for Birgunj in terms of cross border movement of goods and people. The total number of **passenger** vehicles decreased from 42,760 in BS 2071 to 23,100 in BS 2072. The earthquake

and political disturbances in Terai are mainly responsible for such abrupt fall in the numbers.

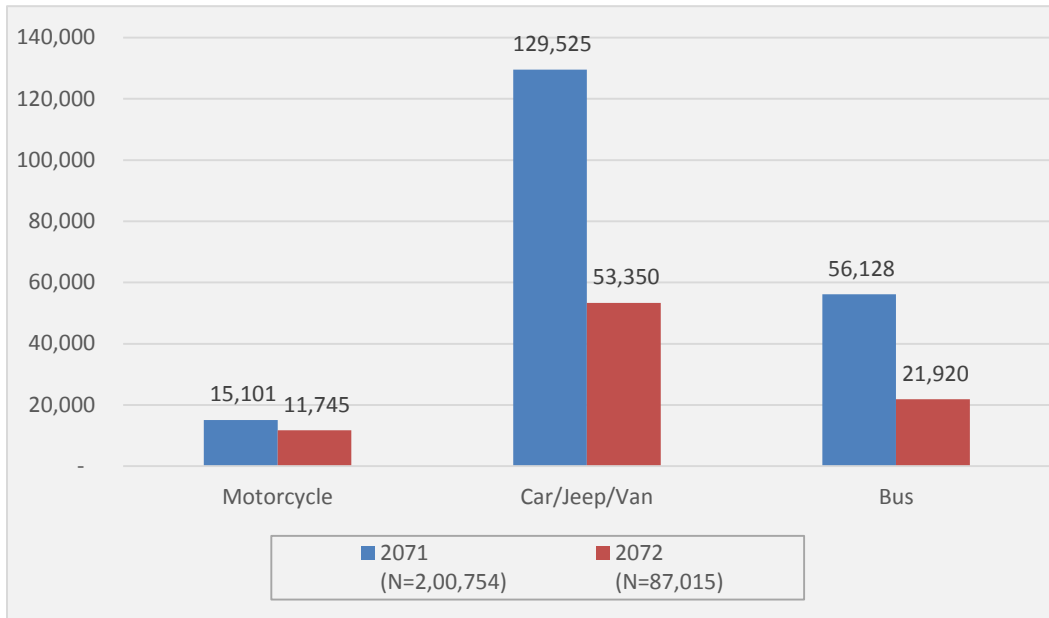


Figure 188: Number of travelers recorded at Birgunj entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

Similar difference was observed in the number of travelers travelling to Nepal in BS 2071 and 2072. There were 200,754 travelers in BS 2071 but the number took a steep plunge to 87,015 in 2072.

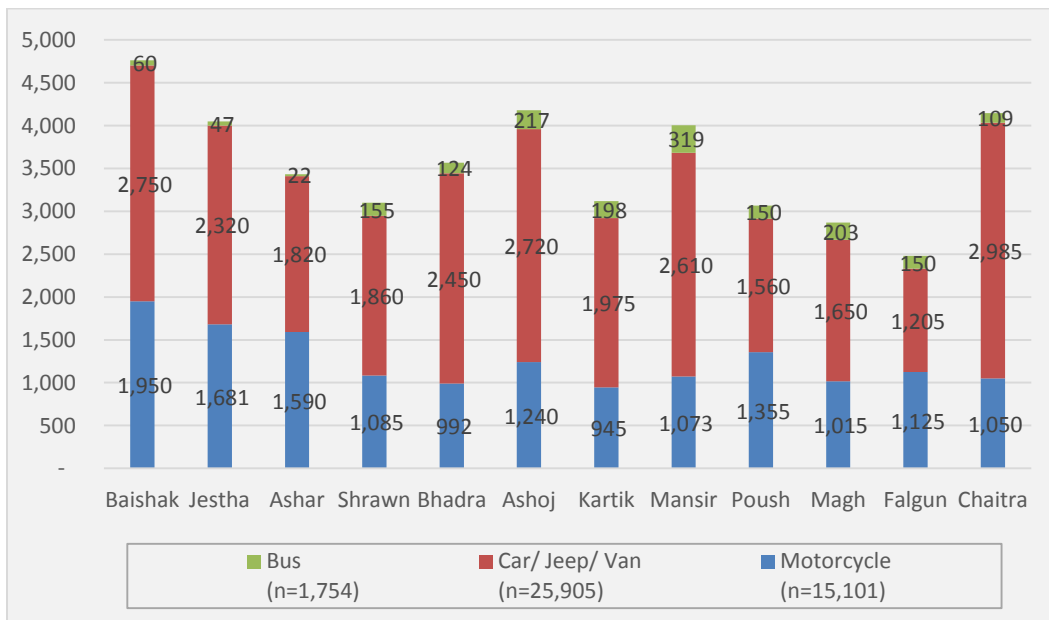


Figure 199: Monthly breakdown of entries of vehicle recorded at Birgunj entry point in BS 2071

The monthly breakdown of the vehicles entry in BS 2071 points to the direction of varied numbers ranging from 2480 as the lowest in the month of Falgun to 4760 vehicles as the highest in the month of Baishakh. The total number of passenger vehicles that entered Nepal in BS 2071 was 42,760.

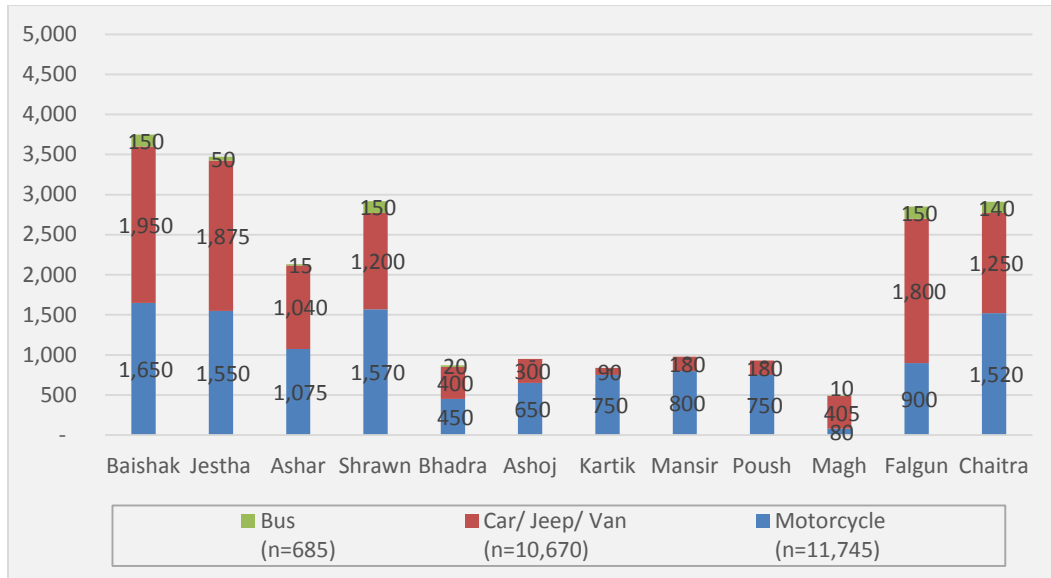


Figure 30: Monthly breakdown of entries of vehicle recorded at Birgunj entry point in BS 2072

In BS 2072, the data was very inconsistent in terms of total flow of the vehicles. The range during the period; from Bhadra to Magh was very low with 495 being the lowest in Magh. The highest mark was seen in Baishakh with 3,750 vehicles entering Nepal.

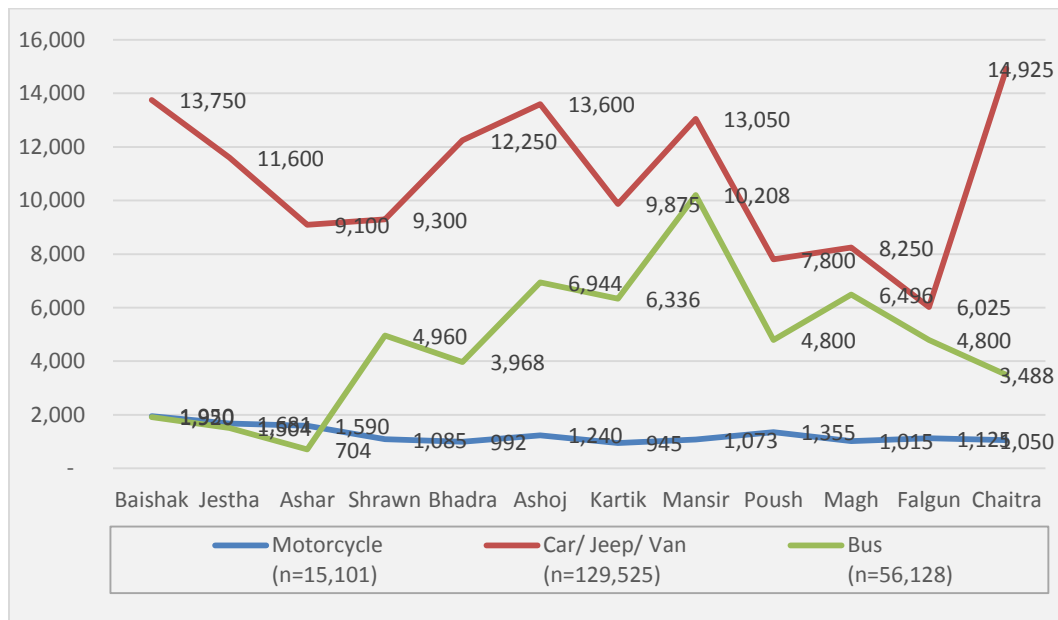


Figure 201: Monthly breakdown of travelers through Birgunj by vehicle used in BS 2071

In BS 2071, there was a marked fluctuation in the the flow of the travelers from India to Nepal through Birgunj entry point. The graph shown above points out the consistent flow of the travelers on motorcycles. On the other hand, the number of travelers plummeted from 9,875 in Mansir to 3,488 travelers in Chaitra. The number of travelers on cars/jeeps/vans also saw similar fluctuation; from 6,025 in Falgun to a sudden raise to 14,925 in Chaitra.

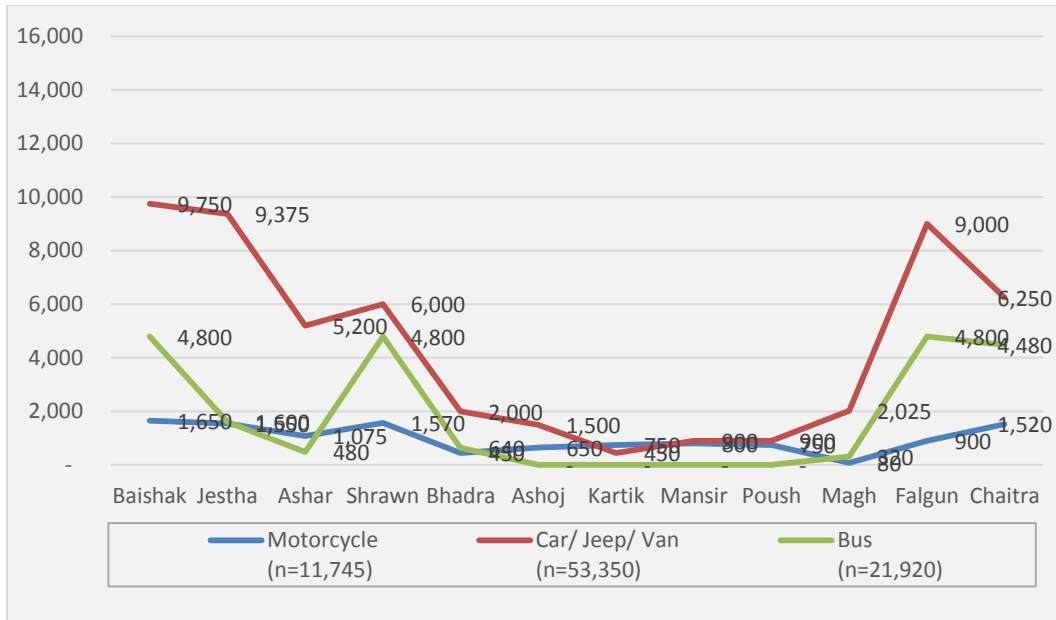


Figure 212: Monthly breakdown of travelers through Birgunj by vehicle used in BS 2072

There was a consistent flow of travelers on motorcycles throughout the year in BS 2072. The range of travelers started with 1,650 in Baisakh and culminated with 1,520 travelers in Chaitra. The number of travelers on the buses also fell in the range of 4,800 travelers in Baisakh to 4,480 in Chaitra. Similarly, the travelers in cars/jeeps/vans plummeted from 9,750 in Baisakh to 750 in Mangsir and then to 9,000 in the month of Falgun.

2.1.6 Janakpur, Dhanusha

Janakpur is culturally rich historical city in Eastern Nepal, mainly popular among Hindu pilgrims because of the famous Janaki Mandir. Due to religious and cultural significance of Janaki Mandir, Dhanushadham, Gangasagar and many other sites and shrines in the area, Janakpur attracts a large number of Indian religious tourists. Janakpur is also home to the only operational railway in Nepal, the Janakpur Railway. It connects Janakpur to the Indian town of Jayanagar.

Janakpur also has a domestic airport with most flights connecting to Kathmandu. Jaleswor and Vittamod are two entry points in Janakpur area that Indian nationals mostly used to enter Nepal. .

Janakpur-Jaleswor

There was a substantial difference in the records of vehicles that entered Nepal from India through Jaleswor entry point between BS 2071 and BS 2072. In BS 2071, entries of 7,122 motorcycles, 14,371 cars/jeeps/vans and 213 buses were recorded. Similarly, there were 3,204 motorcycles, 9,025 cars/jeeps/vans and 62 buses in BS 2072. The numbers amounted to 21,706 vehicles in BS 2071 and 12,291 vehicles in BS 2072.

Table 9: Breakdown of vehicles by type recorded at Janakpur-Jaleswor entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

S.N.	Type of vehicles	No. of vehicle (2071)	No. of vehicle (2072)
1	Motorcycles	7,122	3,204
2	Cars/Jeeps/Vans	14,371	9,025
3	Buses	213	62
	Total	21,706	12,291

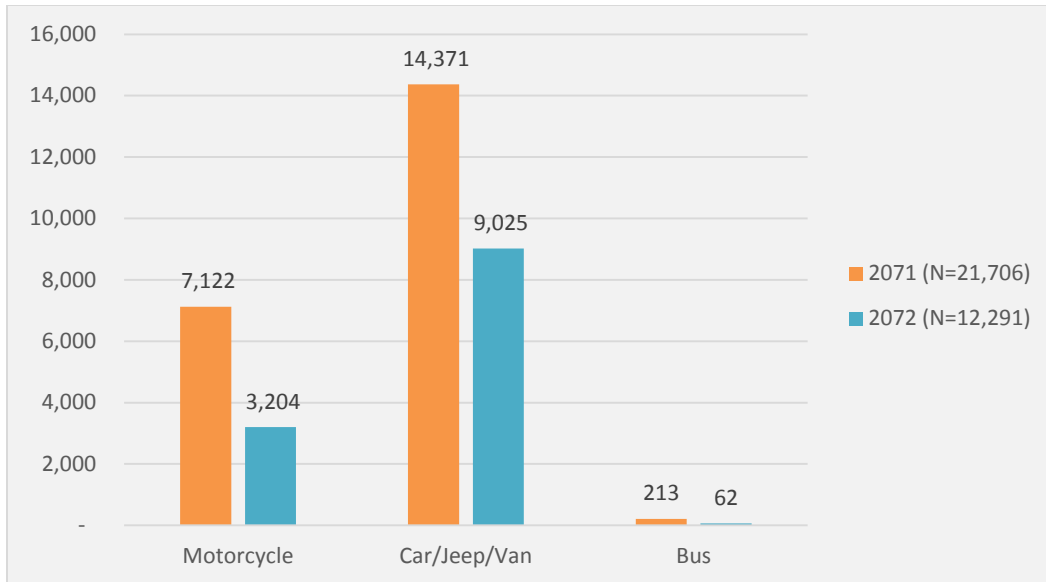


Figure 223: Number of vehicle entries recorded at Janakpur-Jaleswor entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

The comparative analysis of the vehicles that entered Nepal in BS 2071 and BS 2072 in the survey states that there was a huge difference in the numbers of vehicles in BS 2071 and in BS 2072.

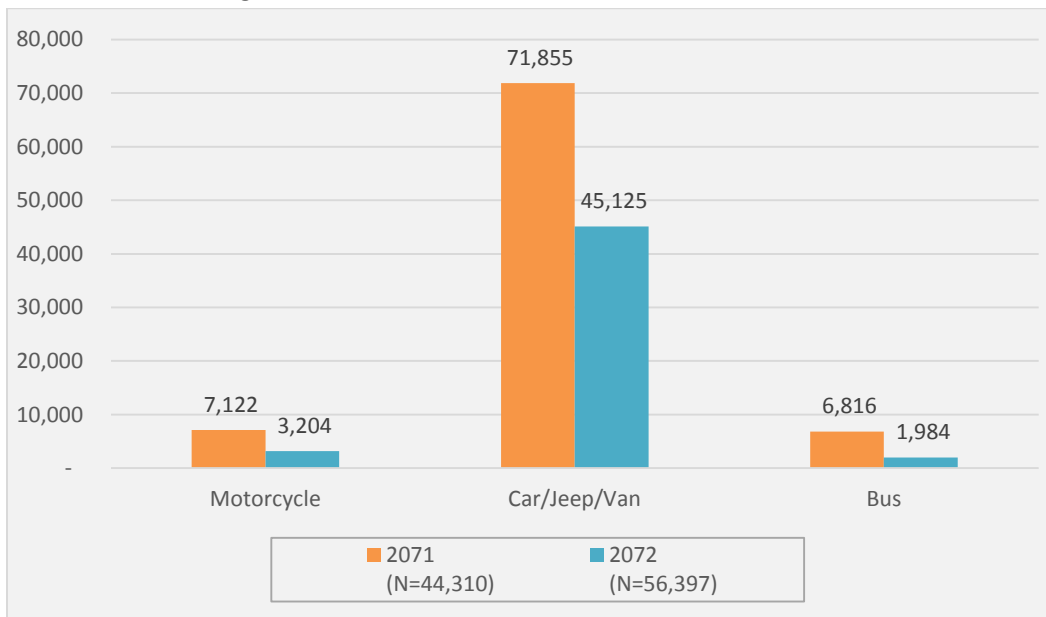


Figure 234: Number of travelers recorded at Janakpur-Jaleswor entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

The total number of travelers decreased from 85,793 in 2071 to 50,313 in 2072, a decline of 41%.

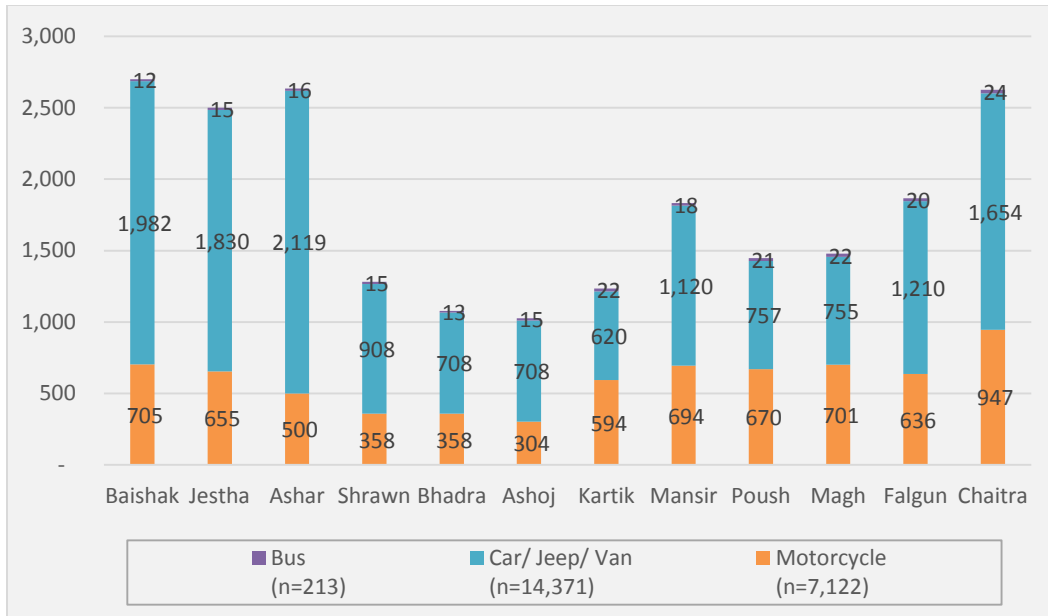


Figure 245: Monthly breakdown of entries of vehicle recorded at Janakpur-Jaleswor entry point in BS 2071

The months of Shrawn, Bhadra, Ashoj and Kartik received the lowest number of vehicles entering Nepal in BS 2071.

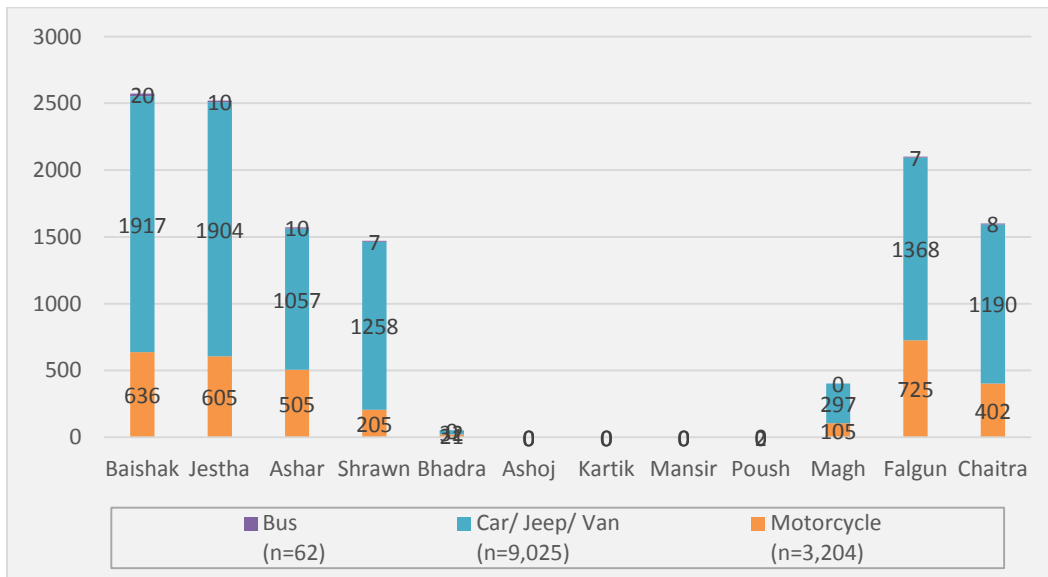


Figure 256: Monthly breakdown of entries of vehicle recorded at Janakpur-Jaleswor entry point in BS 2072

The number of vehicles from India in BS 2072 was difficult to find out. Since there were no record available of vehicles entry in the months during the climax of political disturbances in Terai i.e. Ashoj, Kartik and Mansir, the number of total vehicles in BS 2072 came down to a very low level.

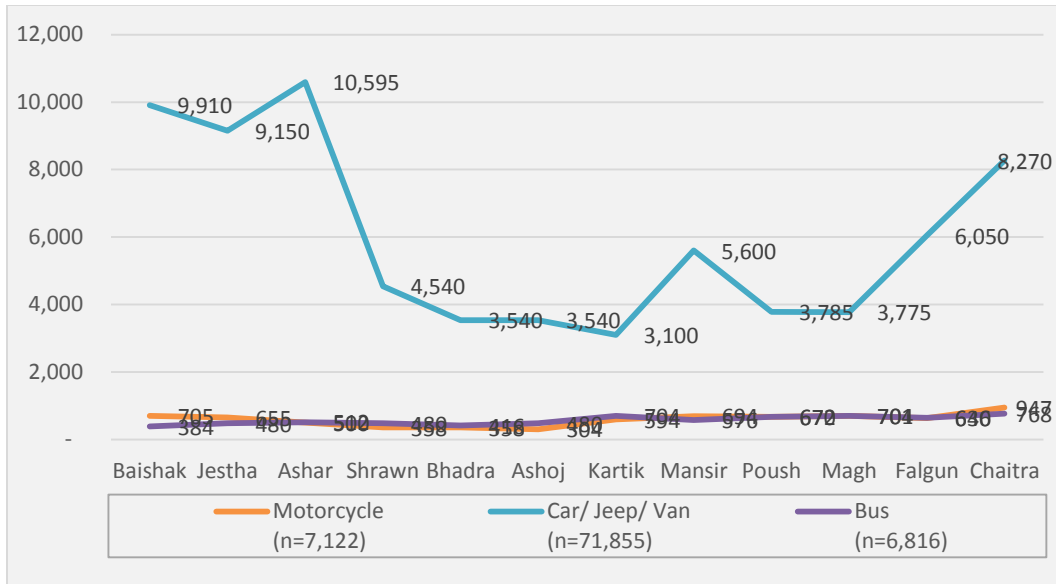


Figure 267: Monthly breakdown of travelers through Janakpur-Jaleswor by vehicle used in BS 2071

The number of travelers by motorcycles and cars/jeeps/vans in BS 2071 remained constant throughout the year. The graph of motorcycles and cars/jeeps/vans overlapped with average number of travelers hovering below 2,000 per month. However, the number of travelers on buses was considerably higher with Ashar being the month with highest number of travelers (10,595) and Kartik being the lowest with 3,100 travelers.

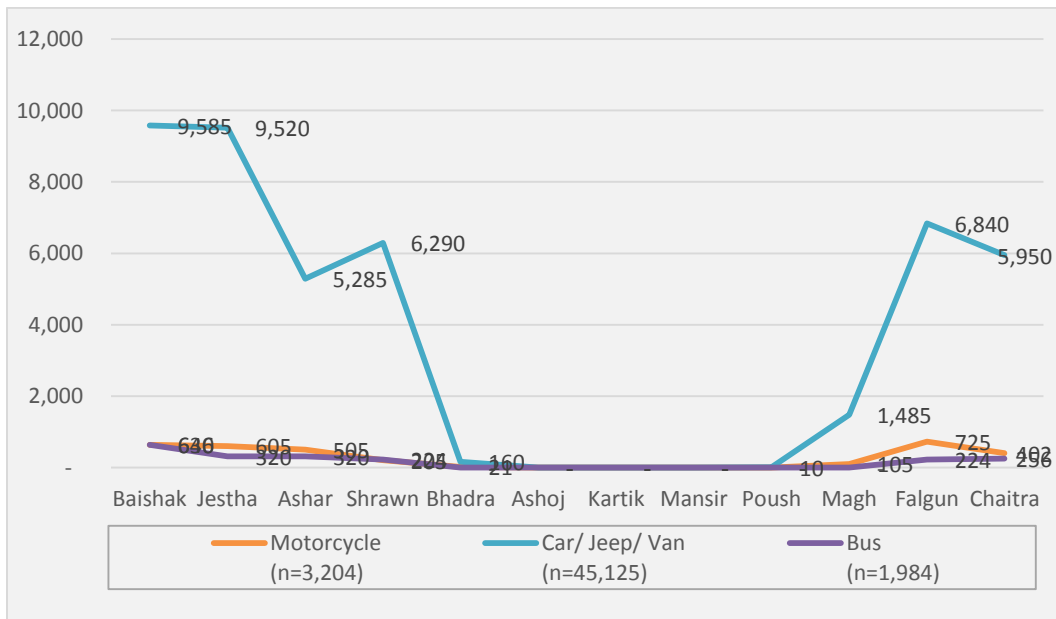


Figure 278: Monthly breakdown of travelers through Janakpur-Jaleswor by vehicle used in BS 2072

In BS 2072, the number of travelers from Janakpur border in Jaleswor saw the lowest flow with no traveler in the months of Ashoj, Kartik and Mansir. The number of travelers on the buses reached the highest number, a total of 9,585 travelers in the month of Baishakh.

Janakpur- Vittamod

The numbers of different category of passenger vehicles that entered Nepal via the entry point at Vittamod, Janakpur in BS 2071 were: 21,776 motorcycles, 10,843 cars/jeeps/vans and 10 buses. In BS 2072, the numbers of motorcycles and buses were 33,471 and 41 respectively. Whereas, the number of cars/jeeps/vans were 23,322. Altogether there were 32,629 vehicles in BS 2071 and 56,834 in BS 2072 that entered Nepal through Vittamod entry point in Janakpur.

Table 10: Breakdown of vehicles by type recorded at Janakpur- Vittamod entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

S.N.	Type of vehicles	No. of vehicle (2071)	No. of vehicle (2072)
1	Motorcycles	21,776	33,471
2	Cars/Jeeps/Vans	10,843	23,322
3	Buses	10	41
	Total	32,629	56,834

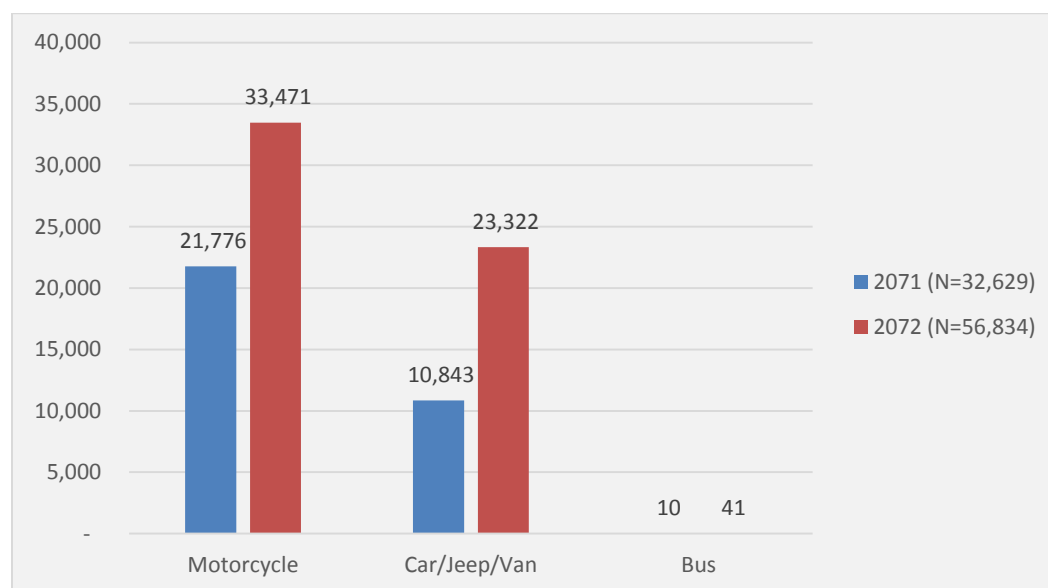


Figure 289: Number of vehicle entries recorded at Janakpur- Vittamod entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

The above figure compares data of three types of vehicles namely motorcycle, car/jeep/van and bus that entered Nepal in two consecutive years; BS 2071 and 2072. The survey finds that there was a rise in the number of total vehicles that entered Nepal in 2072 as compared to the numbers in 2071. In BS 2071, there were 32,629 vehicles whereas in 2072 there were 56,834 vehicles that entered Nepal through Vittamod, a remarkable increase of 74% despite the disturbances in the region.

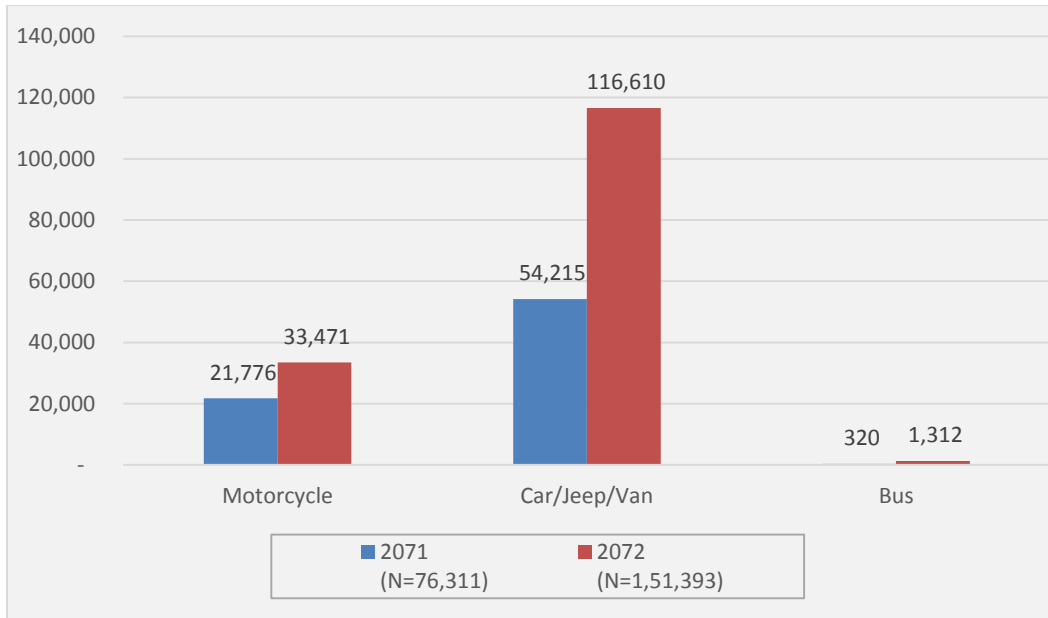


Figure 40: Number of travelers recorded at Janakpur- Vittamod Entry point in 2071 and 2072

The number of travelers through Vittamod border also accelerated in BS 2072. The number of travelers jumped from 76,311 in BS to 151,393 in BS 2072, a colossal growth of 98% in the number of overland travelers from India.

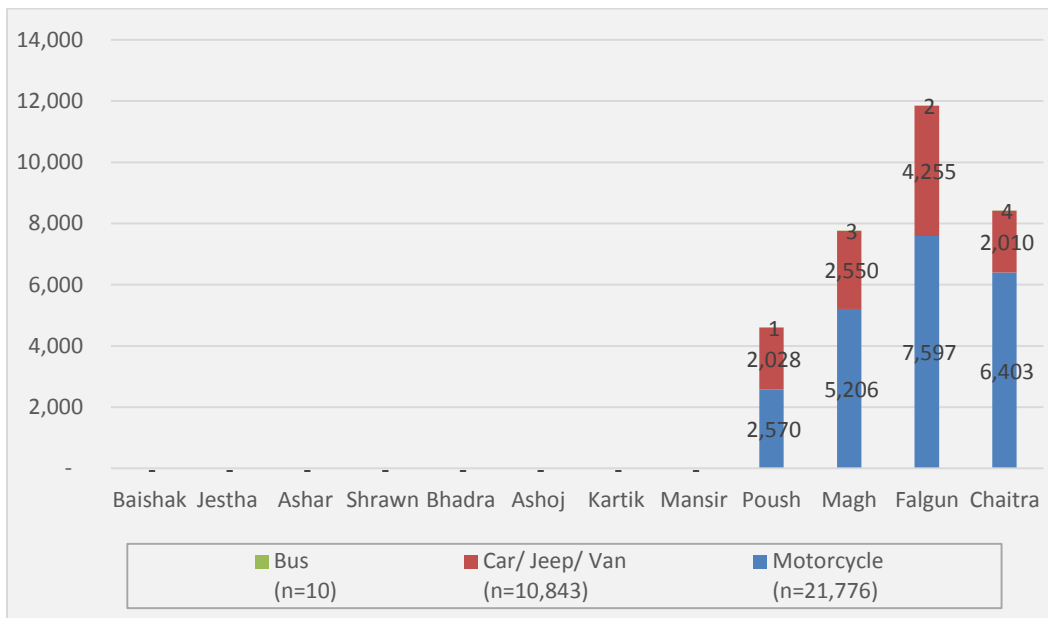


Figure 291: Monthly breakdown of entries of vehicle recorded at Janakpur- Vittamod entry point in BS 2071

There is no record of vehicular movement during the first eight months of BS 2071. Taking into account the entries of the rest four months, there were 21,776 Motorcycles, 10,843 Cars/Jeeps/Vans and 10 Buses. This could be one the reasons for the massive growth in the numbers of vehicle and traveler in 2072 BS.

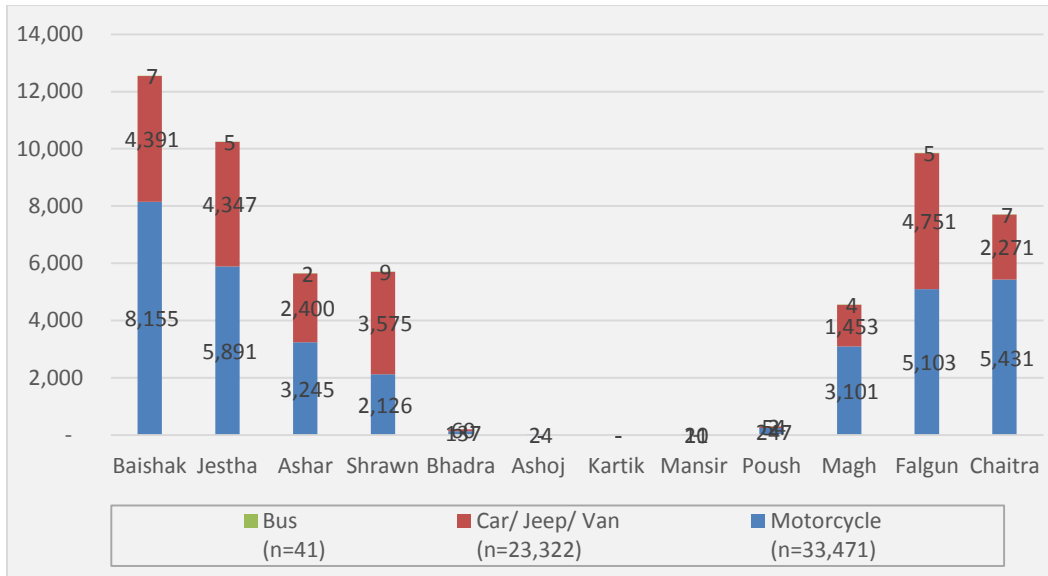


Figure 302: Monthly breakdown of entries of vehicle recorded at Janakpur- Vittamod entry point in BS 2072

The record showed that a very low number of vehicles entered Nepal during the months of Bhadra, Ashoj, Kartik, Manshir and Poush in BS 2072. The highest number of vehicles was recorded in the month of Baishak, with 12,553 vehicles.

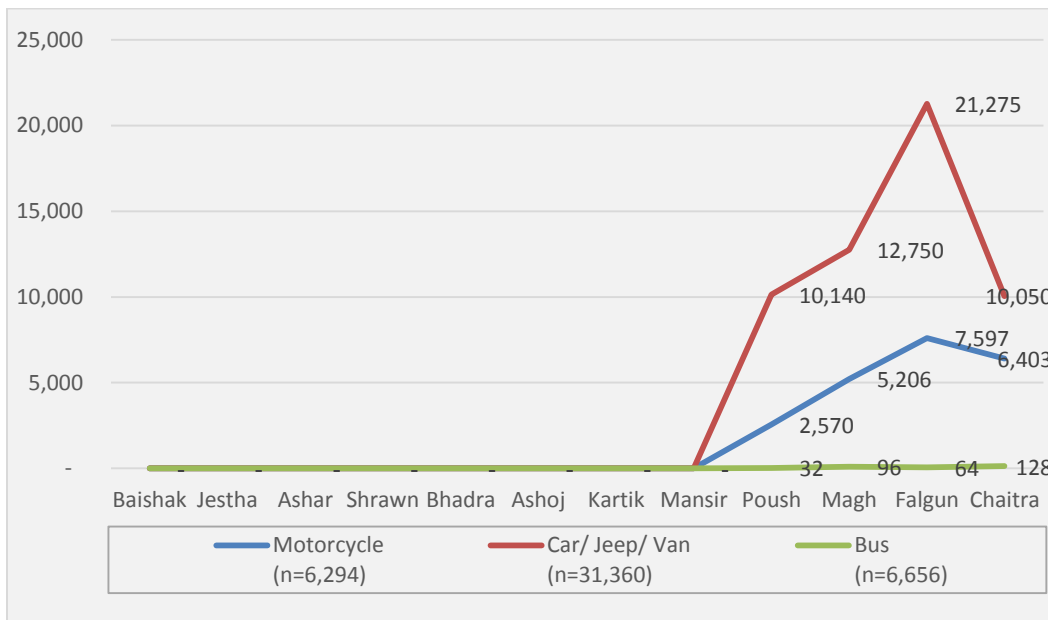


Figure 313: Monthly breakdown of travelers through Janakpur- Vittamod by vehicle used in BS 2071

Here, the number of travelers coming by Cars/Jeeps/Vans was the highest, reaching up to 21,275 in the month of Falgun, whereas the inflow was still more than 10,000 in the other three months.

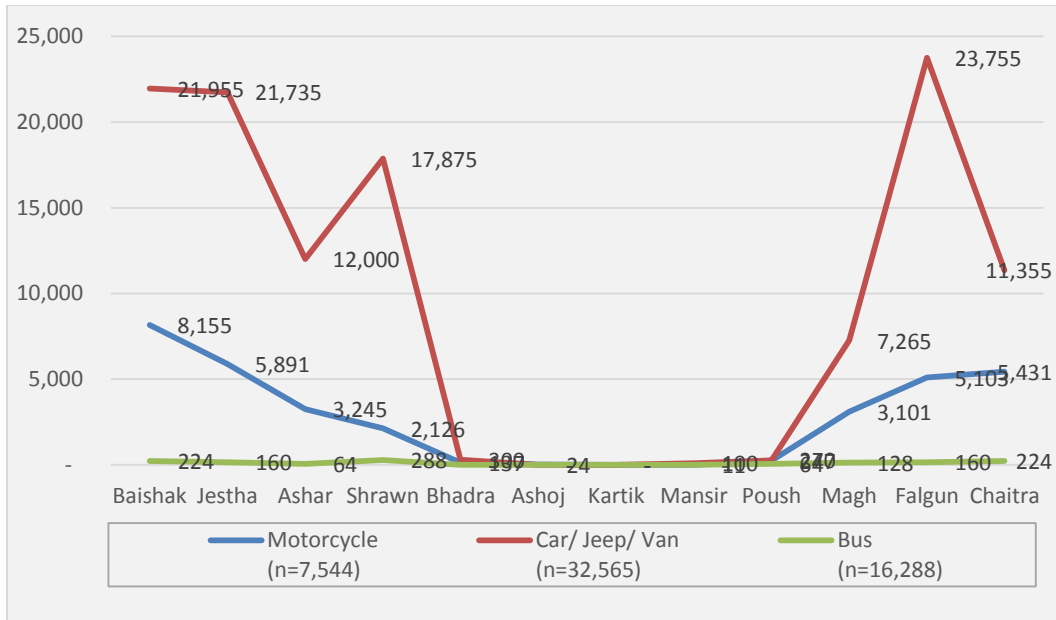


Figure 324: Monthly breakdown of travelers through Janakpur- Vittamod by vehicle used in BS 2072

The number of travelers by bus through Vittamod to Nepal, remained constantly low in BS 2072. The number of travelers by motorcycles was considerably high in the months of Baisakh and Chaitra with 21,966 and 23,755 respectively while the number plummeted to nil in the months of Kartik and Mansir.

2.1.7 Biratnagar, Morang

Biratnagar is a sub-metropolitan city in the southeast Nepal, bordering the Indian town of Jogbani. It is considered another important industrial center of Nepal and hence witnesses a significant movement of vehicles and travelers. Biratnagar is popular with Indian tourists because it is well linked with Kathmandu both by land and air and is a hub for tourists visiting Eastern Nepal.

6,704 motorcycles, 7,427 cars/jeeps/vans and 918 buses entered Nepal through Biratnagar entry point from India in 2071 BS. Whereas in BS 2072, there were 7,379 motorcycles, 8,895 cars/jeeps/vans along with 716 buses that entered Nepal. In summation, the total number of vehicles that entered Nepal through this entry point was 15,049 in BS 2071 and 16,990 in BS 2072.

Table 11: Breakdown of vehicles by type recorded at Biratnagar entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

S.N.	Type of vehicles	No. of vehicle (2071)	No. of vehicle (2072)
1	Motorcycles	6,704	7,379
2	Cars/Jeeps/Vans	7,427	8,895
3	Buses	918	716
	Total	15,049	16,990

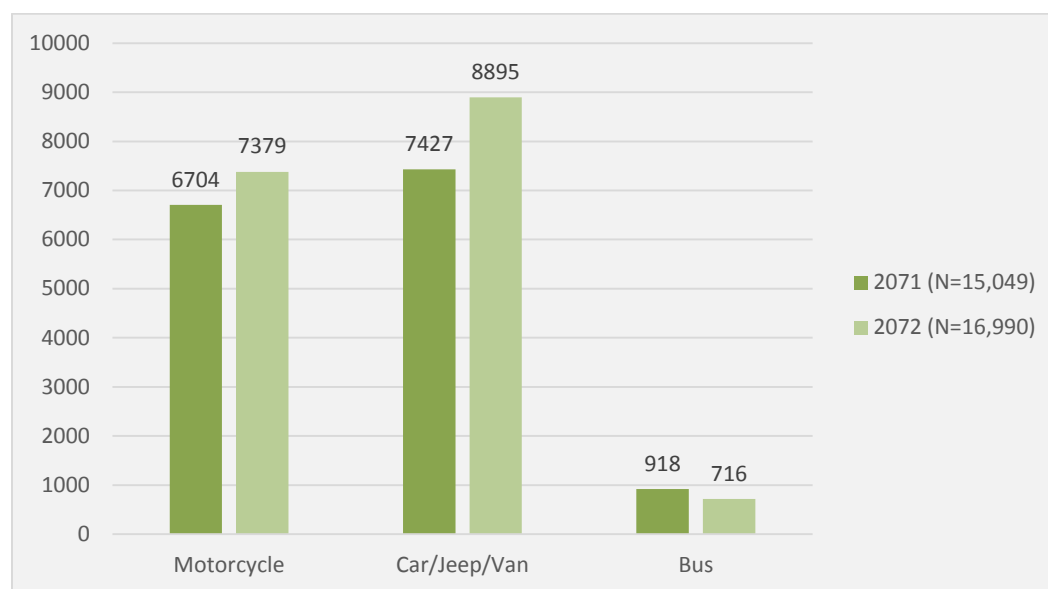


Figure 335: Number of vehicle entries recorded at Biratnagar entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

Similar to the findings at other entry points, the number of vehicles through Biratnagar increased in BS 2072 in comparison to BS 2071. However, the margin is not substantial, only 1,941 more vehicles in BS 2072.

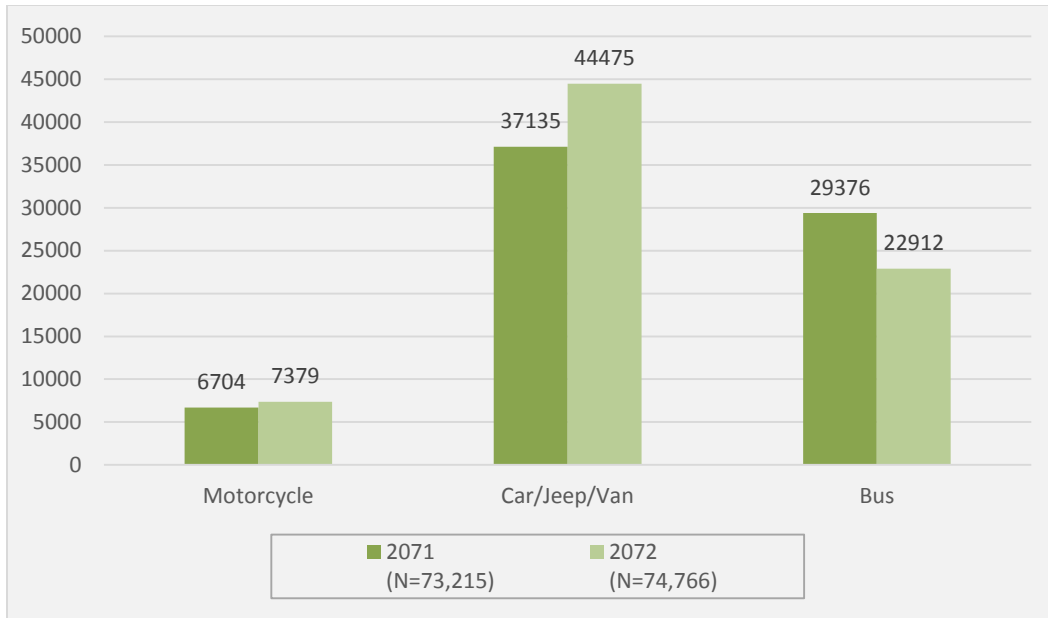


Figure 346: Number of travelers recorded at Biratnagar entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

The number of overland Indian travelers in 2071 was 73,215. The number in BS 2072 exceeded the figure of 2071 only by a small margin, with 74,766 travelers in BS 2072. However, the number of travelers on bus declined in BS 2072 to 22,912 from 29,376 in BS 2071.

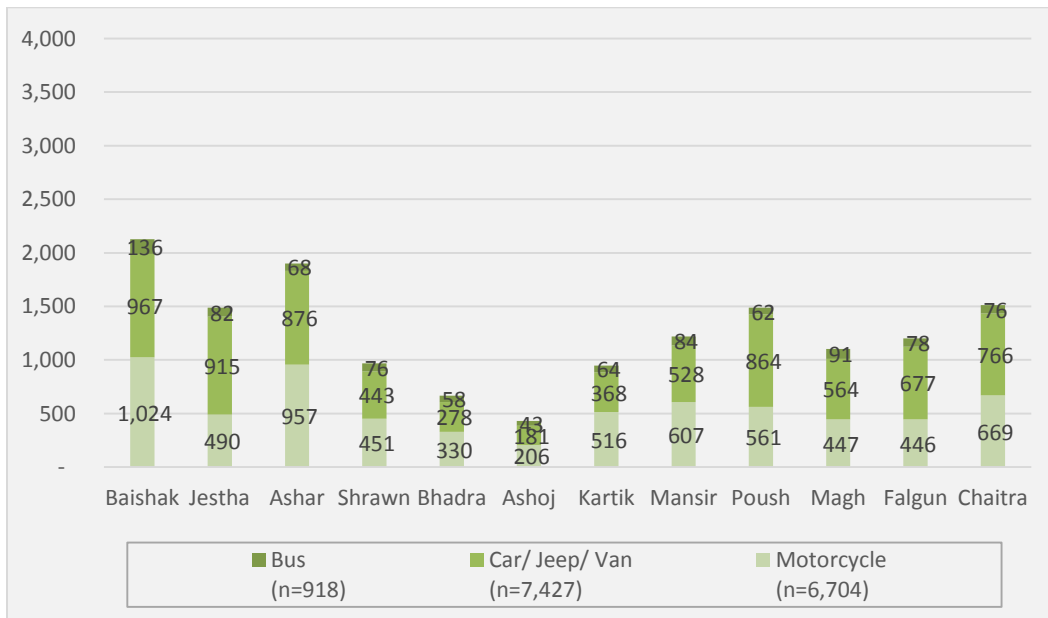


Figure 357: Monthly breakdown of entries of vehicle recorded at Biratnagar entry point in BS 2071

The year 2071 showed consistency to some extent in terms of flow of vehicles to Nepal. The month of Ashoj was observed as the month having the lowest vehicle inflow and the month of Baisakh having the highest.

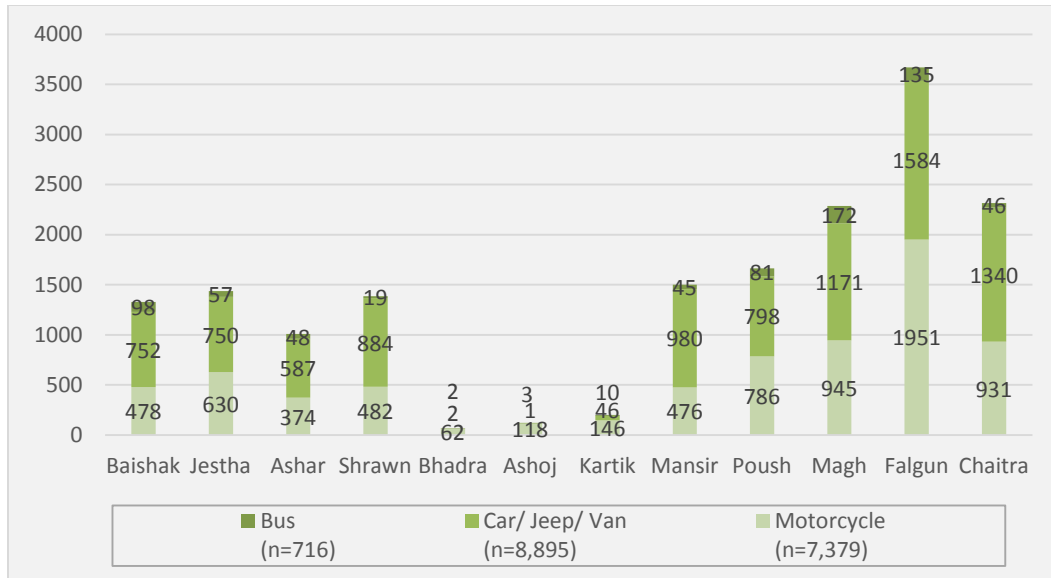


Figure 368: Monthly breakdown of entries of vehicle recorded at Biratnagar entry point in BS 2072

The year BS 2072, owing mainly to the earthquake and political disturbances, saw a slight drop in the number of vehicles that entered Nepal. Especially the months of Bhadra, Ashoj and Kartik were observed as the most affected in terms of numbers while Falgun saw the highest inflow of vehicles.

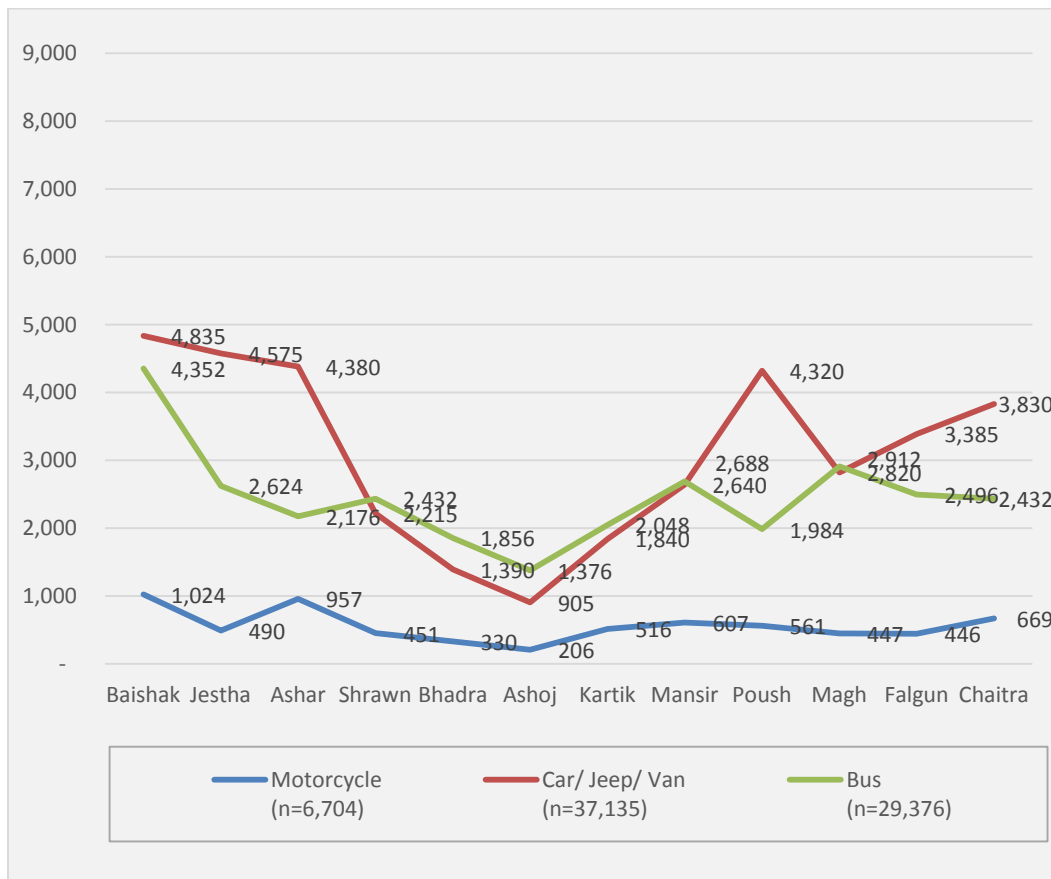


Figure 379: Monthly breakdown of travelers through Biratnagar by vehicle used in BS 2071

In BS 2071, the inflow of travelers on motorcycles was somehow constant throughout the year save for the two extreme points being 206 in Ashoj and 1,024 in Baisakh. The graph loses its consistency when it comes to travelers on buses and cars/jeeps/vans. The latter had the highest number of 4,835 travelers in Baisakh and lowest 905 in Ashoj. Similarly, the number of travelers on buses reached 4,352 as maximum and 1,376 as minimum in the same year.

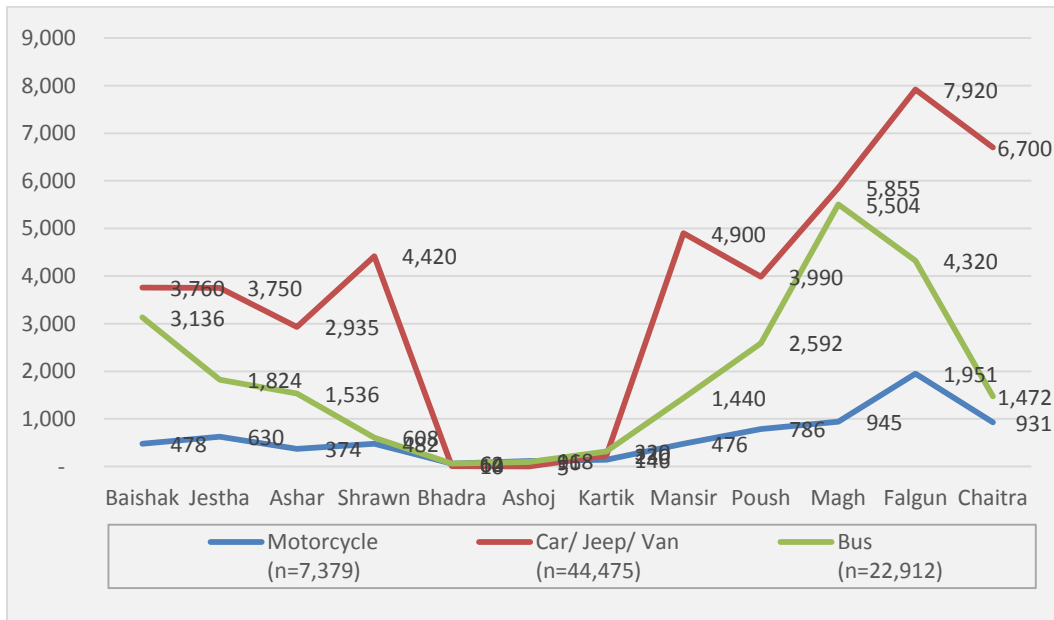


Figure 50: Monthly breakdown of travelers through Biratnagar by vehicle used in 2072

BS 2072 again is considered as the year of abrupt fluctuations. The number of travelers on cars/jeeps/vans ranged from 0 in the month of Asoj to 7,920, the highest in Falgun; those travelling on buses ranged from almost nil in Ashoj to 5,504 in Magh and the number of travelers on motorcycles reached to 1,951 in Falgun to nil in Bhadra and Ashoj. The figures clearly substantiated that the political disturbances in Terai and consequent fuel crisis played a crucial role for the fluctuations in the numbers of Indian visitors overland to Nepal in BS 2072.

2.1.8 Kakarvitta, Jhapa

Kakarvitta is located at the eastern end of Nepal. It lies adjacent to the state of West Bengal and is an important transit for visitors from Kolkata, Siliguri and Darjeeling areas in India. The survey reveals that 43,015 vehicles entered Nepal through Kakarvitta in BS 2071 and 56,199 in BS 2072. Out of 43,015 vehicles, there were 183 buses, 26,948 cars/jeeps/vans and 15,884 motorcycles in 2071. There was a considerable increase in the number of motorcycles that entered Nepal in BS 2072, however, the number of buses decreased to mere 89 in 2072.

Table 12: Breakdown of vehicles by type recorded at Kakarvitta entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

S.N.	Type of vehicles	No. of vehicle (2071)	No. of vehicle (2072)
1	Motorcycles	15,884	25,896
2	Cars/Jeeps/Vans	26,948	30,214
3	Buses	183	89
	Total	43,015	56,199

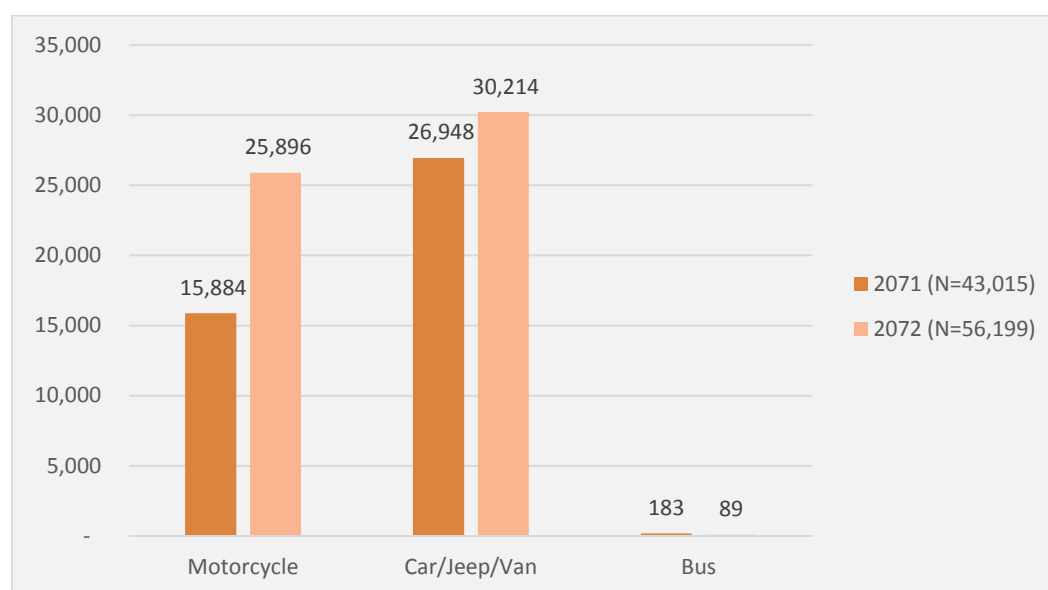


Figure 381: Number of vehicle entries recorded at Kakarvitta entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

The numbers of motorcycles and cars/jeeps/vans increased in BS 2072 compared to the numbers in BS 2071. The number of bus, however, decreased from 183 in BS 2071 to 89 in BS 2072. In aggregate, however, the total number of vehicles increased from 43,015 in BS 2071 to 56,199 in BS 2072.

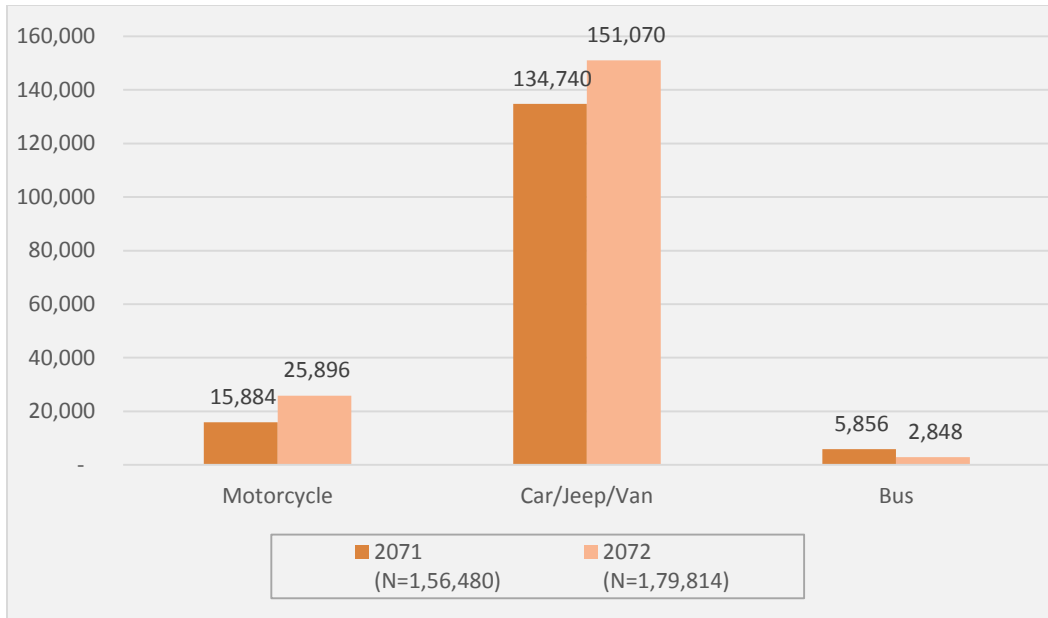


Figure 392: Number of travelers recorded at Kakarvitta entry point in BS 2071 and BS 2072

Similarly, the survey reveals that there was an upward movement in the number of travelers that entered Nepal through Kakarvitta with 179,814 travelers in BS 2072 as compared to 156,480 in BS 2071. However, the number of overland travelers by bus was less in BS 2072 with only 2,848 individuals than in BS 2071 with 5,856 individuals.

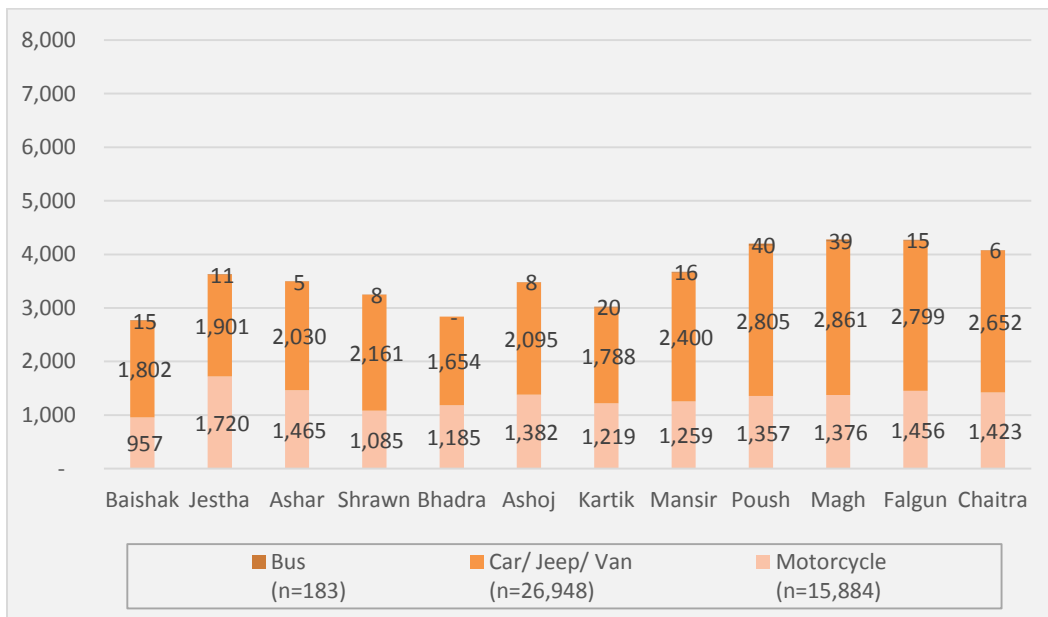


Figure 403: Monthly breakdown of entries of vehicle recorded at Kakarvitta entry point in BS 2071

BS 2071 was a good year in terms of the flow of vehicles to Nepal through Kakarvitta entry point. With a remarkable consistency, the months of Poush, Magh and Falgun saw the highest number of vehicles and, even the lowest movement in Bhadra observed a substantial number of 2,839 vehicles.

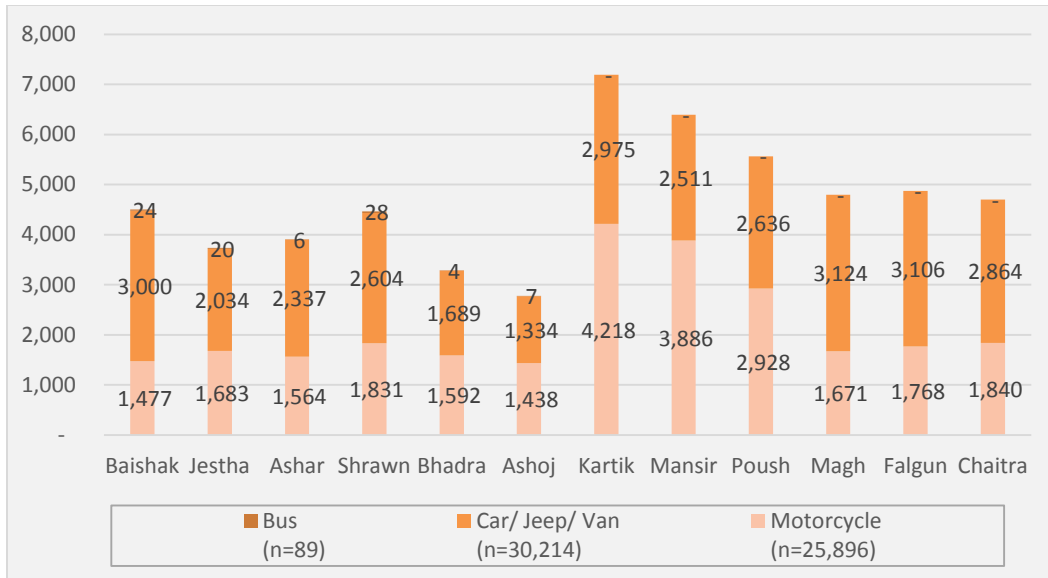


Figure 414: Monthly breakdown of entries of vehicle recorded at Kakarvitta entry point in BS 2072

The year BS 2072 recorded flux of numbers in terms of vehicular movements to Nepal. The highest number was recorded in Kartik with 7,193 vehicles and the lowest being Ashoj, only with 2,779 vehicles.

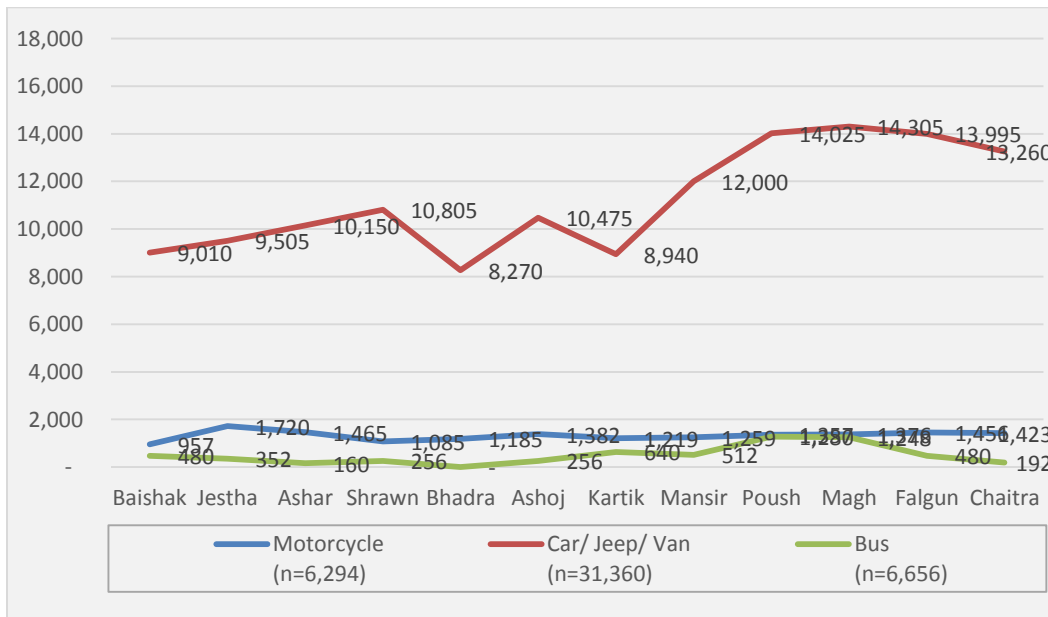


Figure 425: Monthly breakdown of travelers through Kakarvitta by vehicle used in 2071

The results of survey show that the number of motorcycles and buses overlap with each other in the graph with 6,294 motorcycles and 6,656 buses respectively and the number of cars/jeeps/vans oscillated from 9,010 in Baishakh to 13,260 in Chaitra.

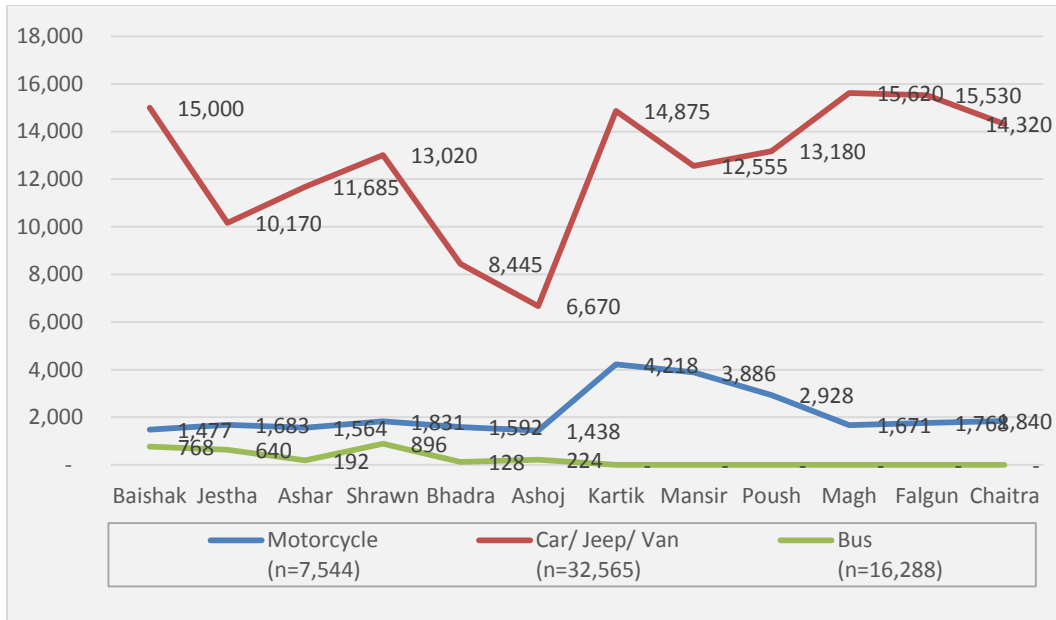


Figure 436: Monthly breakdown of travelers through Kakarvitta by vehicle used in BS 2072

In BS 2072, the data recorded at Kakarvitta border showed inconsistent propensity: some travelers till the month of Asoj and no traveler at all by bus in the months from Kartik to Chaitra. The number of travelers on motorcycle ranged from 4,218 as maximum in Kartik to minimum with 1,438 in Ashoj. Similarly, the number of travelers in cars/jeeps/vans ranged from 15,620 in Magh to 6,670 in Ashoj as the highest and lowest respectively.

2.2 Conclusions of the Survey

The survey concludes that in BS 2071, there were a total of 1,439,586 overland visitors that entered Nepal from India, including 140,878 travelers from the third countries i.e. countries other than India. According to '*Nepal Tourism Statistics*' of 2014 and 2015, the official publication of Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, total arrival of third country tourists by land in BS 2071 sums to 140,878. In order to balance out the double counting of the total tourist arrivals by land, the figure in the '*Nepal Tourism Statistics*' (after making an adjustment in converting the data from Gregorian to Nepal Calendar) needs to be deducted from the figure calculated in this survey. Taking the third country visitors coming via land also in account, it can be inferred that there were *at least* 1,298,708 Indian visitors to Nepal overland in BS 2071.

Similarly, according to '*Nepal Tourism Statistics*' in BS 2072, a total of 136,400 tourists (based on an estimation for the first few months of AD 2016 viz. January to April 15, 2016) arrived in Nepal overland from third countries. The findings of the study show arrivals of 1,021,507 overland tourists, therefore, after subtracting the arrivals from the third countries in the survey period, it is deduced that at least 885,107 Indian visitors traveled to Nepal by land in BS 2072, a decline of 32% compared to previous year.

The calculations are presented in the table below:

Table 13: Net arrival calculation of Indian visitors overland using various modes of transportation in BS 2071

S.N.	Particulars	Visitor Arrivals
A	Total overland arrivals by various modes of transportation from the survey (2071)	1,439,586
B	Total arrival of <i>Third Countries</i> overland tourists in BS 2071	140,878
	Net Arrivals of Indian visitors overland using various modes of transportation (A-B)	1,298,708

Table 14: Net arrival calculation of Indian visitors overland using various modes of transportation in BS 2072

S.N.	Particulars	Visitor Arrivals
A	Total overland arrivals by various modes of transportation from the survey (2072)	1,021,507
B	Total arrival of <i>Third Countries</i> overland tourists in BS 2072	136,400
	Net Arrivals of Indian visitors over land various modes of transportation (A-B)	885,107

The survey has been carried out to gather information and data from the Custom Offices located at the nine specific entry points along Indo-Nepal border. The information and data from the records of Custom Offices thus collected were secondary in nature.

This survey asseverates various conclusions based on the meticulous analysis of the field data and pragmatic interpretation of the findings. These conclusions have been derived to give in-depth understanding on the quantitative aspect of arrivals of Indian visitors to Nepal in BS 2071 and 2072.

2.2.1 Flow of Indian Visitors in BS 2071 and BS 2072

The survey has concluded that all nine entry points located along Indo-Nepal border observed substantial flow of Indian travelers to Nepal throughout BS 2071 and BS 2072.

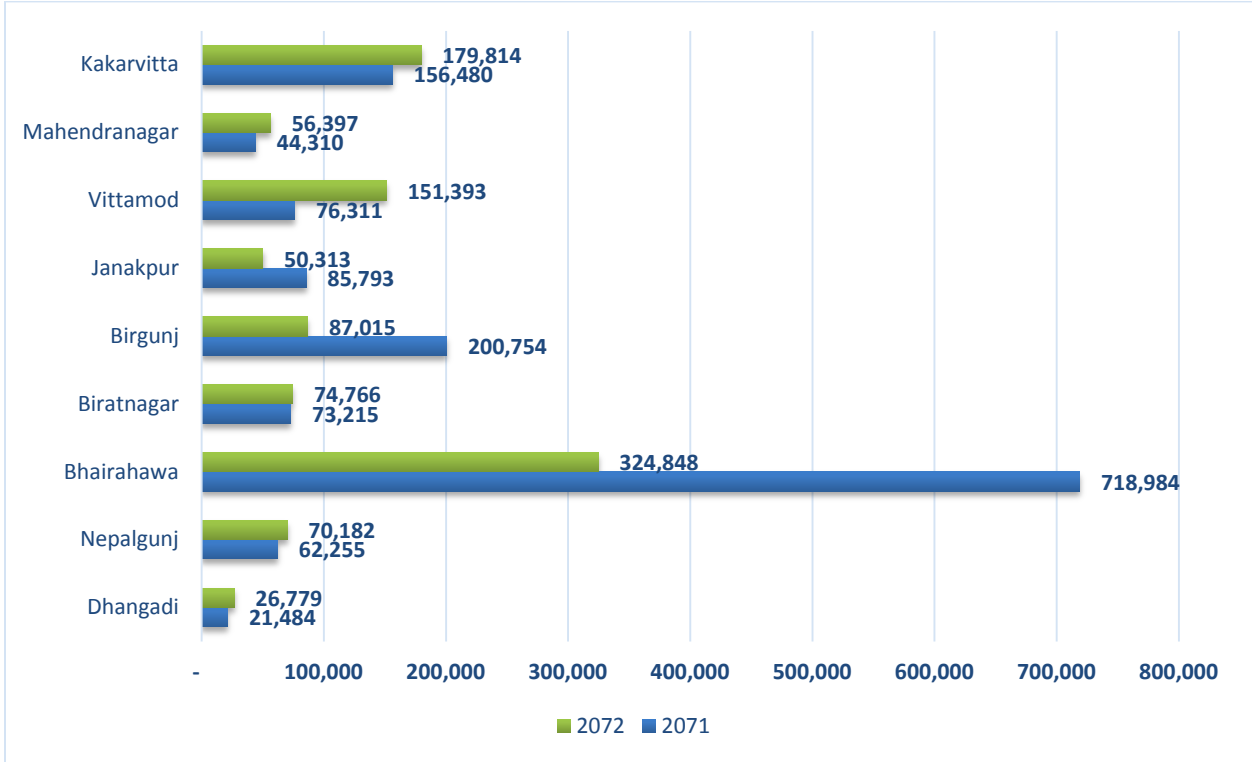


Figure 447: Inflow of travelers at each check point in the year BS 2071 and BS 2072

The entry point in Belhiya, Bhairahwa is found to be the busiest entry point having the maximum inflow of travelers from India in both the years with 718,984 travelers in BS 2071 and 324,848 in BS 2072. However, the difference in the arrival figures between the periods is remarkably evident with 55% decline in BS 2072. The entry points located in Bhairahwa, Janakpur and Birgunj observed fewer Indian visitors in BS 2072 than in BS 2071. This difference can be attributed to the political disturbances that encompassed entire Terai region in the later part of BS 2072. However, through other entry points of Kakarvitta, Mahendranagar, Vittamod, Biratnagar, Nepalgunj and Dhangadi more travelers entered Nepal in BS 2072 than the previous year. This could be because of the varied intensity of political disturbances in the respective regions where these entry points are situated. Putting it down differently, some of the vehicles could have been diverted from the usual routes to those entry points which observed milder severity of disturbances.

2.2.2 Inflow of Indian Visitors via various types of vehicles in BS 2071 and BS 2072

Travelers on Motorcycles: The survey has found that the travelers travelling by motorcycles contributed substantially to the total number of Indian visitors entering Nepal overland.

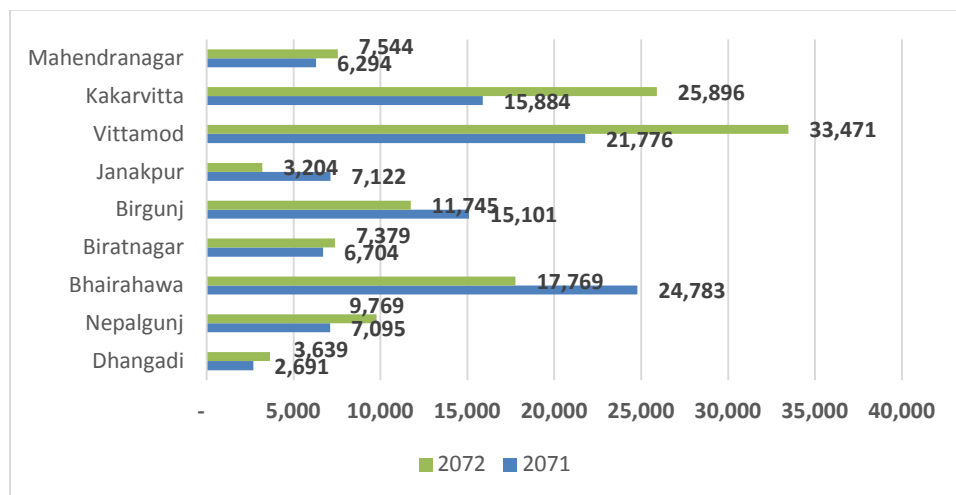


Figure 458: Inflow of travelers by motorcycles in BS 2071 and BS 2072

Although the overall flow of the vehicles saw a fall in BS 2072, the number of travelers on motorcycles was found increased. More motorcycles entered Nepal through entry points in Mahendranagar, Kakarvitta, Vittamod, Biratnagar, Nepalgunj and Dhangadi in BS 2072, with the highest number recorded being 33,471 through Vittamod entry point. In BS 2071, Belhiya in Bhairahawa received 24,783 motorcycles, the highest number among nine entry points. The entry points which observed decline in the flow of travelers on motorcycle in BS 2072 were Janakpur, Birgunj and Bhairahawa.

Travelers on Car/Jeep/Van: In BS 2072, the number of travelers who entered to Nepal through nine entry points by cars/jeeps/vans was higher in most cases than in BS 2071.

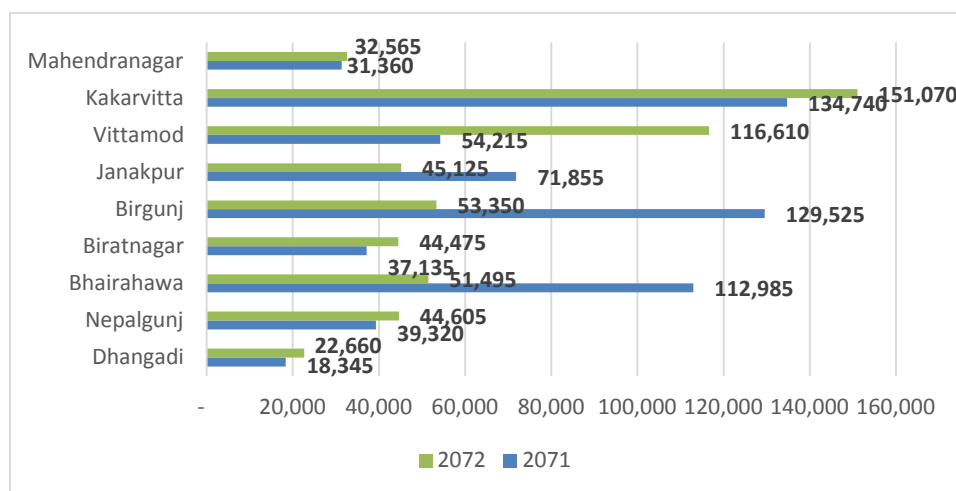


Figure 469: Inflow of travelers by Car/Jeep/Van in BS 2071 and BS 2072

Mahendranagar, Kakarvitta, Vittamod, Biratnagar, Nepalgunj and Dhangadi observed a rise in the number of Indian visitors in BS 2072 with Kakarvitta recording the overwhelming number of 151,070 visitors. Whereas, entry points in Janakpur, Birgunj and Bhairahwa witnessed considerable fall in the number of travelers, primarily due to the political disturbances. In Belhivya, Bhairahawa, where the number of travelers was recorded at 129,525 in BS 2071, it dropped to 53,350 in BS 2072.

Travelers by Buses: The number of travelers who came by buses to visit Nepal through the nine entry points fluctuated dramatically.

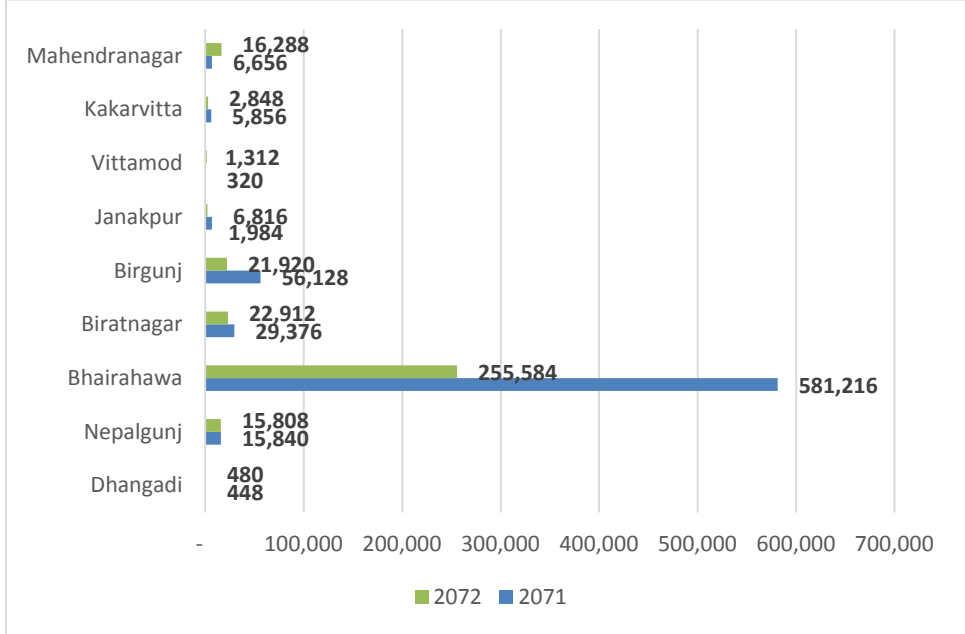


Figure 60: Inflow of travelers by bus in BS 2071 and BS 2072

The difference in the number of visitors recorded in most of the entry points was not substantial although in majority of the cases, the number declined in BS 2072. However, Belhiya, Bhairahawa took a heavy toll in BS 2072 and the difference in the number of arrivals was surprisingly high. The number of travelers fell from 581,216 in BS 2071 to 255,584 in 2072, a clear indication that Bhairahawa suffered most from the heat of political turmoil in Terai.

2.2.3 Flow of Indian visitors through nine entry points in 2071

The number of Indian visitors through nine entry points in BS 2071 varied from as low as 21,484 in Dhangadi to the overwhelming figure of 718,984 in Belhiya, Bhairahawa.

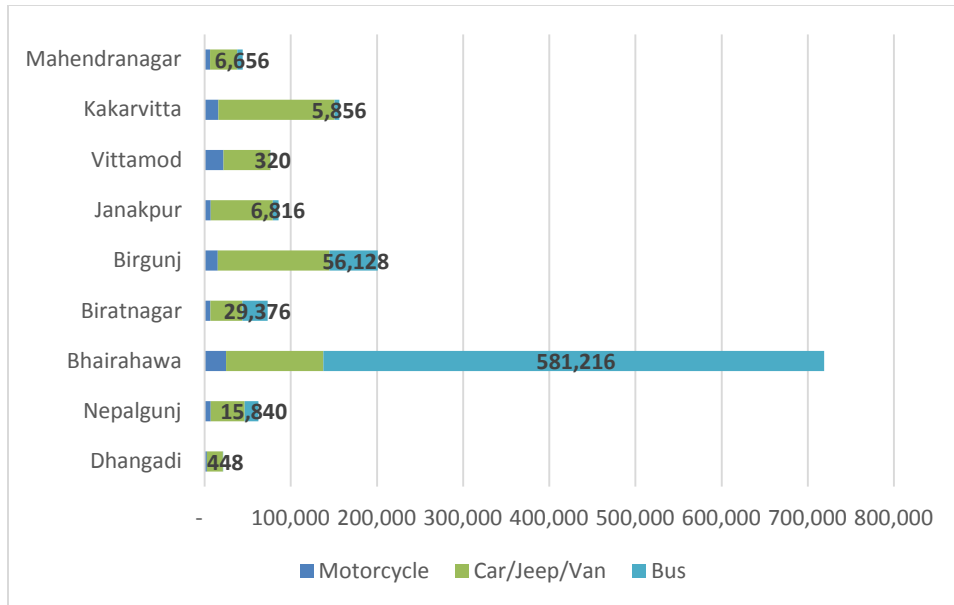


Figure 471: Flow of travelers through nine entry points in BS 2071

Belhiya, Bhairahwa being the busiest entry point in southern plains of Nepal, enjoyed the highest traffic of Indian travelers in BS 2071 with a head count of 581,216 visitors. It is followed by Birgunj with 200,754 and Biratnagar with 73,215 travelers. The highest number of them were found choosing bus as the most popular mode of transportation, with 702,656 travelers, followed by 629,480 choosing car/jeep/van and 107,450 motorcycle.

2.2.4 Flow of Indian visitors through nine entry points in BS 2072

The year BS 2072 was one of the most eventful years in the modern history of Nepal. The mega earthquake of April 25, 2015, the political turmoil in Terai and the subsequent fuel crisis badly affected the entire economic sectors of Nepal, tourism being one of the severely hit one. The impact of these incidents is lucidly reflected on the findings of the survey. In BS 2072, Bhairahwa again experienced the highest flow of Indian travelers with 324,848 travelers while the lowest inflow was observed in Dhangadi with 26,779 travelers. The most preferred mode of transportation for travelers was car/jeep/van category with 561,955 travelers which was followed by bus with 339,136 and motorcycle with 120,416 travelers.

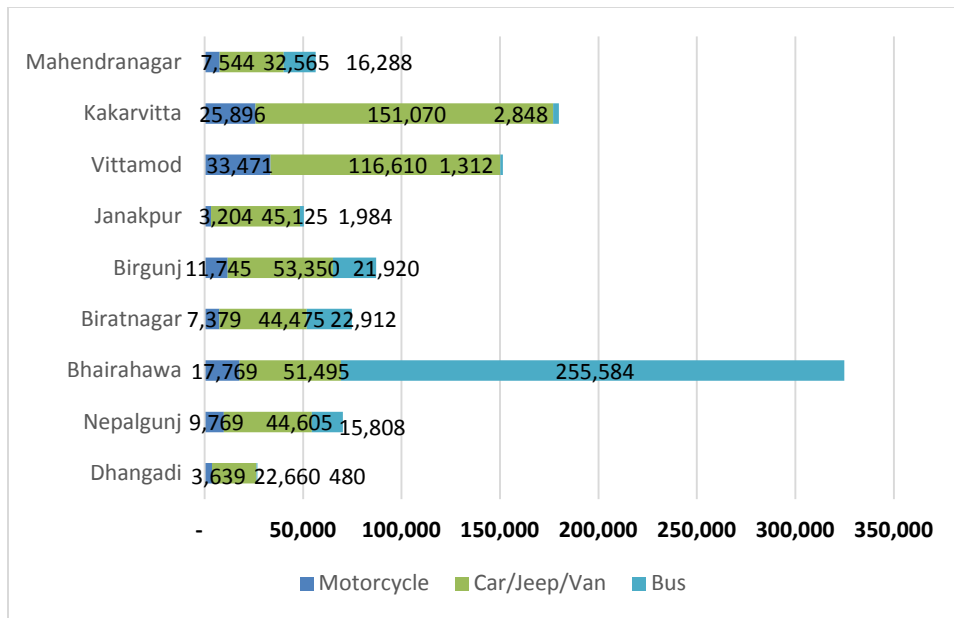


Figure 482: Flow of travelers through nine entry points in BS 2072

Overall, the number of travelers travelling to Nepal through nine entry points to Nepal saw a decline in BS 2072 as compared to BS 2071. This was due to the situation in Terai that limited the movement of Indian as well international visitors to Nepal. The number of overland visitors, 1,439,586 in 2071, went down to 1,021,507 in 2072.

Chapter-3

Indo-Nepal Bilateral Religious Tourism Prospects

India and Nepal enjoy geographical proximity, cultural affinity and shares unique relationships at a government as well as at people's level. Indo-Nepal border measures 1,753 kilometers in length and it is called Dash Gajja (ten-yard no-man's land). By and large, this boundary is not a natural boundary separated by rivers or mountains except the Mahakali River that divides the two countries in the west and the Mechi River that divides them in the east. At certain places, the border even divides the same village.

Both countries are trusted partners in trade and tourism. While Nepal carries out more than 60% of its trade and transactions with India, every year Nepal receives almost 23% of international visitors by air from India. India ranks top the list in terms of FTAs (Foreign Tourist Arrival) to Nepal and Nepal is among the top 15 source markets for FTAs in India in 2014. The top 15 countries were USA, Bangladesh, UK, Sri Lanka, Russian Federation, Canada, Malaysia, France, Australia, Germany, Japan, China (Main), Singapore, Nepal and Thailand. These 15 countries accounted for about 71.97% of total FTAs to India in 2014.

Asian countries with significant Buddhist populations, such as Bhutan, Japan, Myanmar, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand contribute 15-20 percent to total FTAs in India. Whereas Japan, South Korea, Sri Lanka and Thailand contribute more than 20 percent to the total FTAs to Nepal in 2015. It indicates that a greater proportion of the tourist inflow to Nepal comes from countries with considerable followers of Buddhism compared to India. According to Nepal Tourism Statistics 2014 (a normal year for tourism) 12.5% of the FTAs came for the purpose of pilgrimage.

Both India and Nepal due to their secular nature, Hindus being a majority religious group, the number of religious tourism destinations abound in India and Nepal. Nepal shares borders with Indian states of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar and West Bengal where a large number of Hindu population reside and major Buddhist shrines are situated. Nepal receives huge flow of cross country Hindu pilgrims from these states and a large number of Nepali pilgrims also visit religious sites in India every year.

Table 15: Nationality-Wise Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) from South Asian countries in India, 2013-2015

Countries	Number of Arrivals and			Share in %		
	2013	2014	2015			
Afghanistan	111,370	115,569	114,406	1.60	1.50	1.43
Iran	30,527	31,222	30,774	0.44	0.41	0.38
Maldives	45,270	65,052	68,907	0.65	0.85	0.86
Nepal	113,790	126,416	154,720	1.63	1.65	1.93

Pakistan	111,794	96,434	124,924	1.60	1.26	1.56
Bangladesh	524,923	942,562	113,3879	7.53	12.27	14.13
Sri Lanka	262,345	301,601	299,513	3.77	3.93	3.73
Bhutan	15,016	16,001	19,084	0.22	0.21	0.24
FTA from South Asia	1,215,035	1,694,857	1,946,207	17.44	22.07	24.25
Grand Total of FTA	6,967,601	7,679,099	8,027,133	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Bureau of Immigration, India

Table 14 above reveals that while in terms of absolute figures of Indian visitors to Nepal and Nepali visitors to India are at par, the percentage of shares to total FTAs are poles apart. India contributes almost 20% (by air only) to FTAs in Nepal but Nepal contributes less than 2% to FTAs in India. The total number of FTAs recorded during 2015 in India was 8.027 million with a growth of 4.5%, as compared to the FTAs of 7.68 million during 2014 with a growth of 10.2%, as compared to the FTAs of 6.97 million in 2013.

Owing to the unique relations between Nepal and India, they share open border allowing peoples of both countries to cross the borders without any frontier formality. Although the passengers of both the countries traveling by air are required to produce valid identification document at respective immigration offices, peoples traveling overland are exempt from such obligation. As a result a large number of Indians and Nepali nationals cross the borders unaccounted for. The survey has clearly illustrated that around a million Indian visitors travel overland to Nepal in a normal year.

It should be noted here, however, that the *Nepal Tourism Statistics* of Government of Nepal presents statistics on mode of transportations under two classifications: tourist arrivals by air and land but in case of available tourism statistics pertaining to India, there are three such classifications: tourist arrivals by air, sea and land. According to the Indian Tourism Statistics 2014, published by Government of India there were 86.1% of FTAs by air, 0.4% by sea 13.5% and by land in 2014. In case of Nepali FTAs to India in 2014, 93.9% of them used air route and 6.1% used land route. Out of all Nepali FTAs to India by air, 74.7% of them chose Delhi as the major port of entry followed by 8.8% opting Mumbai. Among FTAs from Nepal to India, the highest visited under the category of tourist (77.6%) followed by business (5.1%) and OCI (3.1%). However, *The Indian Tourism Statistics* does not classify *pilgrimage* as one of the purposes of visiting India.

Taking a freedom of subjective judgment, it can be claimed that 6.1% Nepali visitors who traveled overland to India in 2014 entered from third countries i.e. other than Indo-Nepal frontiers.

Number of Indian national departures from India during 2014 was 18.33 million as compared to 16.63 million in 2013, registering a growth rate of 10.3%. *The Indian Tourism Statistics 2014* states that 98.64% chose air routes, 1.18 % chose land route and 0.18 % chose sea route in 2014. According to *Nepal*

Tourism Statistics 2014, published by the Government of Nepal a total of 180,974 Indian visitors by air visited Nepal in 2013. The number tallies with the number of outbound Indian visitors to Nepal in 2013 as per the statistics of *Indian Tourism Statistics 2014*, published by the Government of India.

Number of domestic tourist visits in India during 2014 was 1290.12 million as compared to 1142.53 million in 2013, with a growth rate of 12.9 %. The large volume of domestic Indian visitor market has a great value to tourism of Nepal. However, in case of Nepal the volume and value of domestic tourism is yet to be identified.



Fig. 63: Hindu religious Places in India

Source: www.mapsofindia.com

Despite the popularity of Hindu Pilgrimage in India and Nepal, there is no distinct Hindu pilgrimage circuit in India that connects Nepal, which again is a predominantly (till very lately a Hindu nation) Hindu populated nation with many renowned pilgrimage sites for Hindus all over the world. To

overcome this shortcoming, as per the “*Study on identification of Pilgrimage Circuit Linking various sites in Nepal with Bordering states of India*” the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India has taken an initiative to identify and form pathways for Hindu Pilgrimage Circuits linking Indian States and Nepal. Government of Nepal is also planning to develop Pashupati–Shiva Circuit incorporating all the 12 Jyotirlingas of India and Pashupatinath Temple in Kathmandu.

Based on the immense possibilities that Nepal and India have in developing pilgrimage tourism and the findings of Chapter-2 of this study and drawing largely from the report *on Study on identification of Pilgrimage Circuit Linking various sites in Nepal with Bordering states of India* the following theme-based pilgrimage tourism circuits have been recommended. Most of these circuits link Hindu and Buddhist destinations in northern India with destinations of Nepal.

3.1 Sita Ram Circuit (Sita Ram Janmabhoomi Darshan)

This proposed circuit starts with Lord Ram’s birthplace at Ayodhya and continue to Chitrakoot, Buxar, Darbhanga, Sitamarhi and end in Janakpur in Nepal, the birthplace of Sita and place of their wedding. The duration of visit for this circuit will be approximately 7-8 days starting from Ayodhya and ending in Janakpur and covers approximately 1,000 km of journey.

Route of the Circuit

Ayodhya (Uttar Pradesh, India) -> **Chitrakoot** (Madhya Pradesh, India) -> **Darbhangha** (Bihar, India) -> **Sitamarhi** (Bihar, India) -> **Janakpur dham** (Nepal)

Brief description of the circuit and the importance of the places on the circuit are presented below:

Table 16: Description of Major Places in Sita Ram Circuit

Circuit	State/ Country	Tourist Destination	Religious Significance
Ayodhya	Uttar Pradesh, India	Ram Mandir, Saryu River	Kingdom of Dasarath and the birthplace of Lord Ram
Chitrakoot	Madhya Pradesh, India	Ram Ghat, Bharat Milap, Janaki Kund, Sphatic Shila, Ram Shaiya, Sati Anusuya Ashram, Hanuman Dhara & Gupt Godavari	When Bharat was asked by his ministers to take his seat upon the throne of Ayodhya, he refused and came to Chitrakoot to meet Lord Ram.
Darbhangha	Bihar, India	Ahilya Ashthan	Famous historical temple. This place is known has Ahilya Gram. Gautam Rishi cursed Ahilya during Sita

			Swamyawar and Lord Rama extricated Ahilya from stone here.
Janakpur Dham	Nepal	Janki Temple	Janakpur is the birthplace of Sita and is famous as the capital of Raja Janak's ancient Mithila Kingdom during the Treta Yug.
	Nepal	Dhanushadham	Here Lord Rama broke the Dhanush into three pieces during the Bow-Breaking Ceremony held at Rangabhoomi in Janakpurdham- this was a pre- condition for obtaining the hand of Sita
	Nepal	Important Ponds of Janakpur Dham- Ganga Sagar, Dhanush Sagar, Ratna Sagar, Agni Kund	These ponds have never dried up. Any Pilgrimage is incomplete without a ritual bath.

During Janki Mahotsav, which lasts for 7 days almost 2 million pilgrims congregate in Janakpur. Out of these pilgrims 50% of them are from Bihar and rest are from Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Rajasthan and South India.

The number of pilgrims to these destinations in circuit is huge and the number of pilgrims can be increased by leaps and bounds with proper linkage among the circuit destinations and a focused marketing campaign.

3.2 Shiva Shakti Circuit 1 (Har- Parvati Darshan)

This circuit originates at Pashupatinath, Kathmandu, capital city of Nepal, and continue to Pokhara (another very popular destination in Nepal amongst tourists), Varanasi, Haridwar, Rishikesh and end in Kathmandu in Nepal. The duration of visit for this circuit will be approximately 8-9 days.

As the name (Har-Parvati Darshan) suggests, the circuit has destinations which are famous for Shiva and Parvati or Shakti Temples. It is suggested as Har-Parvati Darshan because one of the many names of the Hindu deity Shiva is *Har* and the Hindu Goddess Parvati or *Shakti* is the wife of Shiva as per ancient Hindu texts.

Route of the Circuit

Pashupatinath (Nepal) -> **Pokhara** (Nepal) -> **Mahendra Nagar** (Nepal) -> **Tanakpur** (Uttarakhand, India) -> **Haridwar** (Uttarakhand, India) -> **Rishikesh** (Uttarakhand, India) -> **Chardham** (Uttarakhand, India) -> **Pashupatinath** (Nepal).

Brief description of the circuit and the importance of the places on the circuit are presented below:

Table 17: Description of Places in Shiva Shakti Circuit–(Har-Parvati Darshan)

Circuit	State/ Country	Tourist Destination	Religious Significance
Kathmandu	Nepal	Pashupatinath Temple, Guheswhori Temple, Kailash Mahadev in Sanga, Doleshwor Mahadev, Dakshinkali, Sobha Bhagwati.	This place is famous for Lord Shiva temple and Mata Shakti temples. Guheswhori Temple is the first Pith of Satidevi as described in the Skanda Purana
Pokhara	Nepal	Gupteshwor Mahadev, Tal Barahi Temple, Bindyabasini Temple.	Lord Shiva's shrine is located inside a cave and others are Shakti pith temple.
Mahendra Nagar and Tanakpur	Nepal	Sidhbaba temple	This place is known as lord Shiva temple.
	Uttarakhand, India	Mata Purnagiri temple	This place is known as Mata Shaktipeeth temple.
Haridwar	Uttarakhand, India	Hari ki Pauri, Ganga river, Mansa Devi Temple	This place is known as gateway of entry -Bhagwan Dwar.
Rishikesh	Uttarakhand, India	Ram Jhula, Lakshaman Jhula, Neelkanth Mahadev	Very famous place of Hindus
Chardham	Uttarakhand, India	Gangotri, Yamunotri, Kedarnath & Badrinath	Very famous Hindu religious places consisting of four pillars of Hindu pilgrimage

This circuit is already very popular amongst Nepali Hindu pilgrims. To make this circuit popular amongst Indians, a focused promotion campaign of this circuit is needed so that the reverse flow of pilgrims from India to Nepal also starts and the tourist flow along this circuit increases.

3.3 Shiva Shakti Circuit 2

Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh, India) -> **Kathmandu** (Nepal) -> **Pokhara** (Nepal) -> **Varanasi** (Uttar Pradesh, India)

This circuit will originate at Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh, India, then move to Kathmandu, capital city of Nepal, and continue to Pokhara and move on to Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh to end. The duration of visit for this circuit will be approximately 3-4 days starting from and ending in Varanasi and covers a distance of 2100 km.

This circuit is a compact version of the Shiva Parvati circuit 1 and has destinations which are famous for Shiv and Parvati or Shakti Temples. This compact circuit is designed so as the affluent pilgrims and tourists can fly to the destinations in the circuit.

The circuit cities/ towns and important destinations to visit are presented in the table below.

Table 18: Description of Places in Shiva-Shakti Circuit 2

Circuit	State/ Country	Tourist Destination	Religious Significance
Kathmandu	Nepal	Pashupatinath Temple, Guheswhori Temple, Kailash Mahadev in Sanga, Doleshwor Mahadev, Dakshinkali, Sobha Bhagwati.	This place is famous for Lord Shiva temple and Mata Shakti temples. Guheswhori Temple is the first Pith of Satidevi as described in the Skanda Purana
Pokhara	Nepal	Gupteshwor Mahadev, Tal Barahi Temple, Bindyabasini Temple.	Gupteshwor Mahadev is the Lord Shiva's shrine inside a cave and others are Shakti pith temple.
Varanasi	Uttar Pradesh, India	Manikarnika Ghat	Manikarnika Ghat is one of the ghats in Varanasi and it's known for being a place of Hindu cremation.
		Kashi Vishwanatha Temple	Kashi Vishvanath Temple is one of the most famous Hindu temples and is dedicated to Lord Shiva.

3.4 Pashupati-Shiva Circuit (12 Jyotirlingas and Pashupatinath)

Pashupati Area Development Trust of Government of Nepal is planning to work closely with Indian authorities to develop Pashupati–Shiva Circuit incorporating all the 12 Jyotirlingas of India and Pashupatinath Temple in Kathmandu.

The names and the locations of 12 Jyotirlinga's are mentioned in Shiva Purana of Hindu Scriptures. According to the Shiva Purana, who recites these Jyotirlingas every evening and morning, is relieved of all sins committed in past seven lives and one who visits these, gets all his/her wishes fulfilled.



Fig. 64: Twelve Jyotirlingas in India and Pashupatinath in Nepal

Source: www.mapsofindia.com

The circuit cities/ towns and important destinations to visit are presented in the table below.

Table 19: Description of Places in Pashupati-Shiva Circuit

Circuit/Jyotirlinga	State/ Country	Tourist Destination	Religious Significance
Somnath	Gujrat, India	Somnath Temple in Prabhas Patan,	Somnath is traditionally considered the first pilgrimage site: the Dwadash Jyotirlinga

		Saurashtra	pilgrimage begins with the Somnath Temple. The temple, that was destroyed and re-built sixteen times, is held in reverence throughout India and is rich in legend, tradition, and history.
Mallikārjuna Swāmi	Srisaillam, Andhra Pradesh, India	Sri Mallikarjuna Swamy Temple, The Bhramarambha Temple	Mallikarjuna in an ancient temple that is architecturally and sculpturally rich. It is a place where Shakti peetha and Jyotirlingam are together. Adi Shankara composed his Sivananda Lahiri here.
Mahakaleshwar	Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh, India	Swayambhu, Mahakaleshwar	Mahakal is home to the Mahakaleshwar Jyotirlinga temple. The Lingam at Mahakal is believed to be Swayambhu, the only one of the 12 Jyotirlingams to be so. It is also the only one facing south and also the temple to have a Shree Yantra perched upside down at the ceiling of the Garbhagriha. It is a place where Shakti peetha and Jyotirlingam are together.
Omkareshwar	Omkareshwar, Madhya Pradesh, India	Mandhata or Shivapur i in the Narmada river; the shape of the island is said to be like the Hindu ॐ symbol.	Omkareshwar is in Madhya Pradesh situated on an island in the Narmada River and home to a Jyotirlinga shrine and the Mamaleshwar temple.
Kedarnath	Uttarakhand, India	Kedarnath forms a part of the smaller Char Dham pilgrimage circuit of Hinduism and the temple was built by Pandavas and revived by Adi Sankaracharya	Kedarnath in Uttarakhand is revered as the northernmost and the closest Jyotirlinga to Lord Shiva's eternal abode of Mount Kailash. Kedarnath forms a part of the smaller Char Dham pilgrimage circuit of Hinduism. Kedarnath, nestled in the snow-clad Himalayas, is an ancient shrine, rich in legend and tradition. Shiva assumed the form of wild boar and dived into the earth at Kedarnath to

			emerge at Pashupatinath
Bhimashankar	Maharashtra, India	Buddha style carvings of Amba-Ambika, Bhootling and Bhimashankar in the hills of Manmaad near Bhimashankar at a height of 1034 metres. Hanuman Lake, Gupt Bhimashankar, Origin of River Bhima, Nag Phani, Bombay Point, Sakshi Vinayak.	There is a Bhimashankara temple near Pune in Maharashtra, which was referred to as Daakini country.
Kashi Vishwananath Temple	Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India	The Kashi Vishwanath Temple in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh is home to the Vishwanath Jyotirlinga shrine, River Ganges and Ghats.	It is perhaps the most sacred of Hindu shrines. The temple is situated in Varanasi, the holiest city for Hindus, where a Hindu is expected to make a pilgrimage at least once in his life, and if possible, also pour the remains of cremated ancestors on the River Ganges. The temple stands on the western bank of the holy river Ganges, and is one of the twelve Jyotirlingas. In fact, it is a place where Shakti peeta and Jyotirlingam are together. It is the holiest of all Shiva temples. The main deity is known by the name Vishwanath or Vishweshwara meaning Ruler of the universe. The temple town, is considered the oldest living city in the world, with 3500 years of documented history, is also called Kashi.
Trimbakeshwar Shiva Temple	Trimbakeshwar, near Nashik Maharashtra, India	Dattatreya temple Neel parvat, Annapurna ashram, renuka devi, khandoba temples etc.	The Trimbakeshwar Temple, near Nashik in Maharashtra, is a Jyotirlinga shrine associated with the origin of the Godavari River.

Nageshvara Jyoti	Dwarka, Gujarat, India		Nageshvara Jyotirlinga is one of the 12 Jyotirlinga shrines mentioned in the Shiva Purana. Nageshvara is believed to be the first such shrine.
Vaidyanath Temple	Deoghar, Jharkhand, India	There are 22 temples in the same campus of different Gods and Goddesses among which Lord Shiva is empowered as being supreme. The temple of Shiva, Baidyanath faces the east, and is 72 feet tall, and it is lotus shaped. According to religious belief this temple has been built by Vishwakarma,	According to Hindu beliefs, the demon king Ravana worshipped Shiva at the current site of the temple to get the boons that he later used to wreak havoc in the world. Ravana offered his ten heads one after another to Shiva as a sacrifice. Pleased with this, Shiva descended to cure Ravana who was injured. As he acted as a doctor, he is referred to as Vaidhya ("doctor"). From this aspect of Shiva, the temple derives its name.
Rameshwar	Rameswaram Tamil Nadu, India	Ramanathaswamy Temple, sixty-four Tirthas (holy water bodies) in and around the island of Rameswaram	Rameswaram in Tamil Nadu is home to the vast Ramalingeswarar Jyotirlinga temple and is revered as the southernmost of the twelve Jyotirlinga shrines of India. It enshrines the Ramesvara ("Lord of Rama") pillar.
Grishneshwar	Ellora, Aurangabad, Maharastra, India		Grishneshwar Jyotirlinga is one of the twelve Jyotirlinga shrines mentioned in the Shiva Purana "kotirudra sahinta", referred as 'Ghushmeshwar Jyotirlinga'. Ghushmeshwar is believed as the last or the twelfth Jyotirlinga on earth.
Pashupatinath	Kathmandu, Nepal	Temple of Pashupatinath, Mrigasthali, Guheswori Temple, Bagmati River etc.	The holiest shrine dedicated to Lord Shiva, Pashupatinath is one of the four most important religious sites in Asia for devotees of Shiva. Built in the 5th century, the site itself is said to have existed from the beginning of the millennium when a Shiva lingam was discovered here. Temples dedicated to several other Hindu

			and Buddhist deities surround the temple of Pashupatinath
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Development and promotion of this circuit needs joint planning and programs from Indian and Nepali authorities. Since the Jyotirlingas are spread all over India and the circuit connects them to Pashupatinath in Nepal, the visitors may split this circuit tour into many journeys and complete it as a Pilgrimage of Lifetime.

3.5 Narayan Circuit 1

Route of the Circuit

Tirupati (Andhra Pradesh, India) -> **Kathmandu** (Nepal) -> **Pokhara** (Nepal) -> **Muktinath** (Nepal)

This proposed circuit will originate at Tirupati (Andhra Pradesh, India), then move to Kathmandu, capital city of Nepal, and continue to Muktinath in Nepal. The duration of visit for this circuit will be approximately 6-7 days starting from and ending in Andhra Pradesh.

The circuit cities/ towns and important destinations to visit are presented in the table below.

Table 20: Description of Places in Narayan Circuit 1

Circuit	State/ Country	Tourist Destination	Religious Significance
Tirupati	Andhra Pradesh, India		The main attraction of Tirupati is the Sri Venkateshwara Temple located at the hilltop of the Tirumala hills. Dedicated to Lord Vishnu, it has a mesmerizing idol completely made out of pure gold and ornamented with a magnificent crown. It is made on the basis of Dravidian architecture. This temple claims to be one of the richest temples of the world.
Kathmandu	Nepal	Budhanilkantha, Changu Narayan, Shesh Narayan, Ichangu Narayan, Bishankhu Narayan, Krishna Mandir in Patan	Budhanilkantha Temple is a Hindu open air temple dedicated to Lord Vishnu. Budhanilkantha Temple is identified by a large reclining statue of Lord Vishnu. The temple's main statue of Budhanilkantha is considered the largest stone carving in Nepal. The temples of four Narayans and are situated at four corners of the valley and the Krishna Mandir is made of only stones

Pokhara	Nepal	Famous Touristic Place	Pokhara is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Nepal and is situated en route to Muktinath
Muktinath	Mustang, Nepal	Manikarnika Ghat Kashi Viswanatha Temple	The temple of Muktinath, situated in the trans-Himalayan district of Mustang and dedicated to Lord Vishnu and Avalokiteshwar, is a site equally venerated by the Hindus and Buddhists alike. There are also several monasteries and caves where Guru Rinpoche or Padmasambhava, is believed to have meditated

3.6 Narayan Circuit 2

Route of the Circuit

Jaggannath Puri (Odisha, India) -> **Kathmandu** (Nepal) -> **Pokhara** (Nepal) -> **Muktinath** (Nepal)

This proposed circuit will originate at Jaggannath Puri (Odisha, India), then move to Kathmandu, capital city of Nepal, and continue to Muktinath in Nepal. The duration of visit for this circuit will be approximately 6-7 days starting from and ending in Odisha.

The circuit cities/ towns and important destinations to visit are presented in the table below.

Table 21: Description of Places in Narayan Circuit 2

Circuit	State/ Country	Tourist Destination	Religious Significance
Jaggannath Puri	Odisha, India	Jaggannath Puri Temple	Puri is one of the four holy dharmas of India (The others are Dvaraka, Badarinath and Rameshvaram) dedicated to Lord Vishnu. Puri is called Sri Purushottama Dhama, the abode of the Lord Vishnu on earth. Puri is about 2 km wide and 4 km long.
Kathmandu	Nepal	Budhanilkantha, Changu Narayan, Shesh Narayan, Ichangu Narayan, Bishankhu Narayan, Krishna Mandir in	Budhanilkantha Temple is a Hindu open air temple dedicated to Lord Vishnu. Budhanilkantha Temple is identified by a large reclining statue of Lord Vishnu. The temple's main statue of Budhanilkantha is considered the largest stone carving in Nepal. The

		Patan	temples of four Narayans and are situated at four corners of the valley and the Krishna Mandir is made of only stones
Pokhara	Nepal	Famous Touristic Place	Pokhara is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Nepal and is situated en route to Muktinath.
Muktinath	Mustang, Nepal	Manikarnika Ghat Kashi Viswanatha Temple	The temple of Muktinath, situated in the trans-Himalayan district of Mustang and dedicated to Lord Vishnu and Avalokiteshwar, is a site equally venerated by the Hindus and Buddhists alike. There are also several monasteries and caves where Guru Rinpoche or Padmasambhava, is believed to have meditated.

In addition to these circuits *Shakti Circuit* could be developed including Kalighat Kali Temple in West Bengal, India and Guheshwori, Dakhsinkali, Banglamukhi and Kumari Temples in Kathmandu, Manakamana in Gorkha and Bindhyabasini Temple in Pokhara. Similarly, *Mahavarat Circuit* commemorating Mahabharat war that had happened in 3139 BC and *Vinayak Circuit* dedicated to Lord Ganesha could be developed and promoted. *Mahavarat Circuit* may include places like Indraprastha (New Delhi), Hastinapur (Meerut, India), Kurukshetra (Haryana, India), Biratnagar (Nepal) and Swargadwari (Pyuthan, Nepal). *Vinayak Circuit* may connect Ashtavinayaks and Siddhivinayak Temples (Mumbai), Shri Mayureshwar Mandir (Pune) in India and Suryavinayak, Chandravinayak, Jalvinayak and Siddhivinayak Temples in Kathmandu, Nepal.

3.7 Buddhist Circuits

Buddhist Circuit connecting the major sites in India and Nepal has become a mainstream tourism product and is already popular in the global market of 450 million Buddhists as well as general visitors. The Buddhist Circuit is a route that follows in the footsteps of the Buddha from Lumbini in Nepal where he was born, through Bihar in India where he attained enlightenment, to Sarnath and Kushinagar in Uttar Pradesh in India, where he gave his first teachings and died. This iconic route only includes places where the Buddha actually spent time, and these sites – all of which are over 2500 years old – are among the most significant and revered for all Buddhists. India Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) of Government of India operates Buddhist Circuit Tourist Train with an offer of eight days package connecting Bodhgaya - Nalanda - Rajgir - Varanasi - Sarnath - Kushinagar - Lumbini and Sravasti.

According to *Investing in the Buddhist Circuit*, a report published by Government of India and International Finance Corporation, a total of 7.78 million visits were recorded in various sites in India in 2012. Out of these 6.75 million were foreigners and rest were Indian visitors. Similarly, in 2015 a total of 748,294 footfalls were recorded in Lumbini in Nepal. There were 488,852 Nepali visitors, 130,262 were Indian nationals and rest were international visitors.



Fig.65: Buddhist Religious Places in India and Nepal

Source: www.mapsofindia.com

In addition to the mainstream Buddhist Circuit many sub-circuits can be developed around each of the major Buddhist heritage sites namely Bodhgaya, Sarnath, Kushinagar and Lumbini. For instance, there are following sites around Lumbini, Nepal, the birthplace of Siddharth Gautam that are being promoted as Buddhist sub-circuits:

Tilaurakot: Located about 27 km west of Lumbini, it is the actual capital of Kapilvastu and the home of King Suddhodhan, father of Prince Siddhartha Gautama who later became the Buddha. This is believed to be the place where Lord Buddha spent the first 29 year of his life.

Kudan: 4.5km south of Tilaurakot, it is the place where King Suddhodhan met Lord Buddha for the first time after he returned from cosmic enlightenment.

Gotihawa: It is believed to be the birthplace and the place of Nirvana or Krakuchanda Buddha who came before Shakyamuni Buddha.

Devdaha: 54 km east of Lumbini lies the maternal hometown of Queen Mayadevi, Prajapati Gautami and Princess Yasodhara. Prince Siddhartha spent his childhood here and seven year after his enlightenment Lord Buddha visited Devdaha.

Ramagram: It is a 7 meter high brick stupa containing one of the eight Astha Dhatu (relics) of Lord Buddha.

Furthermore, there are numerous Buddhist stupas and monasteries in Kathmandu and surrounding areas which are very popular among Buddhist as well as general visitors. Boudhanath and Swaymbunath are the most revered Buddhist shrines in Kathmandu valley. Nambobuddha which lies 38km east of Kathmandu, is the place where Lord Buddha gave up his body out of compassion for a starving tigress and her cubs.

Chapter-4

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation of Nepal Government assembles, analyzes and disseminates statistics related to tourists and tourism every year. However, it does not maintain any data of Indian visitors entering Nepal overland. Similarly, the responsible authorities in Indian also do not maintain any data of Nepali people entering India overland. Nevertheless, it is a common knowledge that a large number of Nepalese also travel to India overland for wide range of purposes such as social, business, pilgrimage, employment, education, health etc.

Indian nationals visit Nepal for various purposes. Although specific statistics are seldom published, it is a cogent assumption that tourism, pilgrimage and business are the primary motivational factors for their travel to Nepal. Detail statistics on the overland Indian visitors to Nepal are even rare.

India and Nepal both are home to the iconic Hindu and Buddhist religious sites which are visited by millions of pilgrims and general visitors every year. As such they embrace pilgrimage tourism deeming its religious and cultural significance which has an immense direct and multiplier effects on employment generation, regional balance, foreign currency earning and contribution to the GDP. For further development of pilgrimage tourism, governments and private sectors of both countries need to work in a coordinated way so that the benefits are maximized and challenges are collectively mitigated. This would also provide enough leeway for inspiring public-private model for development. This model is renowned in tourism sector for its vibrancy in planning, designing and executing the decisions in most contemporary and pragmatic way.

Based on the findings of the study and various other reports on pilgrimage tourism, the following recommendations are put forth for optimizing the benefits of pilgrimage tourism by India and Nepal:

1. In order to collect more accurate data on Indian visitors traveling to Nepal and vice versa, the report hereby presents some recommendations which help the task of collecting and analyzing tourism statistics in a meaningful way:

- ***Proper and daily digital recording system***

Commuters crossing the border between Nepal and India are not required to fulfill any frontier formality. This is due to the special relations between Nepal and India. This report recommends that a system is introduced in all the entry points to record the number of people crossing the border without undermining the bilateral relations and current privileges enjoyed by the peoples of both countries. Most of the records or log entries of the vehicles at the custom offices are kept manually in the registers. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that all the data at the entry points be digitally managed so that these can be retrieved when needed.

- **Regular and More comprehensive data**

Compilation and analysis of such data should be regular covering more areas using intensive methods and segregation tools to create more understanding and reality on the number and background of people entering Nepal. This is also important for the safety and security of the tourists visiting Nepal.

- **Removal of Policy restraints**

During the study it has been observed that a vehicle cannot pass through the Indo-Nepal border for more than 30 times in a year. However, in reality the vehicles from India frequently cross the border and refrain from registering their entry due to such legality. The Governments need to make the necessary amendments in the policy to facilitate smooth movements of the vehicles.

2. Organizing **visit to major pilgrimage sites by head of the state or governments** or by prominent celebrities associated with either Hinduism or Buddhism in order to endorse or encourage the concept of traveling to those destinations.
3. An assessment of **tourism infrastructure at each of the proposed circuit destination (tourist facilities, amenities and activities)** and their en route stretches should be carried out to identify appropriate planning and infrastructure work to make these circuits viable and flourishing in the religious tourism sector of India and Nepal.
4. This study has also found that the **road connections and transport facilities at the Indo-Nepal border** are at poor state and need immediate improvement and they are not in a stage to meet even the existing demand. It is suggested that the governments should raise this issue upfront in their bilateral meetings for its improvement and maintenance. This endeavor not only motivates tourist to visit Nepal or India but will also popularize cross border tourism between Nepal and Indian states.
5. It is suggested that the first step for development and promotion of these circuits should concentrate taking action on the immediate requirements for each circuit and then proceed for planning and implementation of extensive infrastructure for tourists at each of the destinations of the circuits.
6. Joint promotion campaign in the Buddhist source markets to attract the Buddhist tourists, emphasizing on **Pilgrimage, Spirituality and Ancient Heritage**.
7. The success of Buddhist Circuit has proved that the potential of religious tourism is enormous but yet to be harnessed and harvested. Many shrines in India and Nepal share a common derivation and complement each other and have one or the other connection. **Announcement of joint packages by both governments** will facilitate and encourage exchange of pilgrimage between two countries.
8. The private sectors of India and Nepal should be encouraged to float special and innovating pilgrimage tours. The existing travel related associations, Chambers and Charity institutions should be roped in for devising collective program so that their expertise becomes pivotal for reaping the benefits existing in our strength in the realms of pilgrimage and general tourism. Excellent joint programs (integrating destinations of two countries as complementary) should be promoted by the governments through their national electronic/print media. Governments of India and Nepal could provide some incentives to commence such tours in the beginning till they become independent and sustainable gradually replicating this model to other promising destinations having potential for future growth.

Such innovative pilgrimage focused sample tour in Kathmandu is presented below:



DevDarshan

Religious Tours of Temples and Shrines by comfortable coach for the Hindu Pilgrims!

Monday	:	Shiva Darshan	Tuesday	:	Ganesh Darshan
		Pashupatinath			Kamaladi Ganesh
		Kedareshwore			Surya Vinayak
		Kailashnath (Sanga)			Jal Vinayak
		Kumbheshwore			Karya Vinayak
Wednesday	:	Narayan Darshan	Thursday	:	Shakti Darshan
		Budhanilakantha			Bhadrakali
		Krishna Mandir			Kumari
		Changu Narayan			Banglamukhi
		Ichangu Narayan			Dakshinkali

Contact: XYZ Travel and Tours, Kathmandu Nepal. Tel:xxxxxxx
 email: info@xyztravel.com.np website: www.xyztravel.com

Figure 66: A sample pilgrimage tour in Kathmandu Valley

9. Governments of India and Nepal are strongly recommended to organize educational or familiarization tours to the pilgrimage sites in India and Nepal for media and tour operators based in both countries.
 10. Last but not the least; a high level policy level intervention is required to formalize the exchange of visitors between Nepal and India. Signing of a **bilateral MoU between India and Nepal** to develop and promote pilgrimage tourism is highly recommended.
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Annexure

I. Details of the vehicle entry records in 2071

District		Border	
Kailali		Dhangadi	
No. of Vehicles			
Nepali Month	Motorcycle	Car/Jeep/Van	Bus
Baishak	192	156	3
Jestha	169	149	2
Ashar	201	252	0
Shrawn	183	161	0
Bhadra	193	139	1
Ashoj	225	171	2
Kartik	278	289	0
Mansir	251	361	1
Poush	168	416	1
Magh	223	449	1
Falgun	259	478	2
Chaitra	349	648	1
Total	2691	3669	14

No. of Visitors		
Motorcycle (1)	Car/Jeep/Van (5)	Bus (32)
192	780	96
169	745	64
201	1260	0
183	805	0
193	695	32
225	855	64
278	1445	0
251	1805	32
168	2080	32
223	2245	32
259	2390	64
349	3240	32
2691	18345	448

District		Border	
Banke		Nepalgunj	
No. of Vehicles			
Nepali Month	Motorcycle	Car/Jeep/Van	Bus
Baishak	820	1255	99
Jestha	790	850	44
Ashar	623	744	16
Shrawn	471	412	24
Bhadra	423	278	21
Ashoj	363	365	11
Kartik	437	430	59
Mansir	584	607	39
Poush	476	637	21
Magh	542	665	39
Falgun	814	1005	86

No. of Visitors		
Motorcycle (1)	Car/Jeep/Van (5)	Bus (32)
820	6275	3168
790	4250	1408
623	3720	512
471	2060	768
423	1390	672
363	1825	352
437	2150	1888
584	3035	1248
476	3185	672
542	3325	1248
814	5025	2752

Chaitra	752	616	36
Total	7095	7864	495
	District	Border	
	Rupandehi	Bhairahawa	

752	3080	1152
7095	39320	15840

Nepali Month	No. of Vehicles		
	Motorcycle	Car/Jeep/Van	Bus
Baishak	1368	1623	1309
Jestha	1864	2057	1415
Ashar	2165	1940	1387
Shrawn	2010	1917	1598
Bhadra	2071	1840	1427
Ashoj	2108	2006	1605
Kartik	2015	1808	1603
Mansir	3381	2710	1191
Poush	1590	1601	2268
Magh	1902	1709	1304
Falgun	2107	1789	1653
Chaitra	2202	1597	1403
Total	24783	22597	18163

No. of Visitors		
Motorcycle (1)	Car/Jeep/Van (5)	Bus (32)
1368	8115	41888
1864	10285	45280
2165	9700	44384
2010	9585	51136
2071	9200	45664
2108	10030	51360
2015	9040	51296
3381	13550	38112
1590	8005	72576
1902	8545	41728
2107	8945	52896
2202	7985	44896
24783	112985	581216

District	Border
Morang	Biratnagar

Nepali Month	No. of Vehicles		
	Motorcycle	Car/Jeep/Van	Bus
Baishak	1024	967	136
Jestha	490	915	82
Ashar	957	876	68
Shrawn	451	443	76
Bhadra	330	278	58
Ashoj	206	181	43
Kartik	516	368	64
Mansir	607	528	84
Poush	561	864	62
Magh	447	564	91
Falgun	446	677	78
Chaitra	669	766	76
Total	6704	7427	918

No. of Visitors		
Motorcycle (1)	Car/Jeep/Van (5)	Bus (32)
1024	4835	4352
490	4575	2624
957	4380	2176
451	2215	2432
330	1390	1856
206	905	1376
516	1840	2048
607	2640	2688
561	4320	1984
447	2820	2912
446	3385	2496
669	3830	2432
6704	37135	29376

District	Border
Parsa	Birgunj

Nepali Month	No. of Vehicles		
	Motorcycle	Car/Jeep/Van	Bus
Baishak	1950	2750	60
Jestha	1681	2320	47
Ashar	1590	1820	22
Shrawn	1085	1860	155
Bhadra	992	2450	124
Ashoj	1240	2720	217
Kartik	945	1975	198
Mansir	1073	2610	319
Poush	1355	1560	150
Magh	1015	1650	203
Falgun	1125	1205	150
Chaitra	1050	2985	109
Total	15101	25905	1754

Motorcycle (1)	No. of Visitors	
	Car/Jeep/Van (5)	Bus (32)
1950	13750	1920
1681	11600	1504
1590	9100	704
1085	9300	4960
992	12250	3968
1240	13600	6944
945	9875	6336
1073	13050	10208
1355	7800	4800
1015	8250	6496
1125	6025	4800
1050	14925	3488
15101	129525	56128

District	Border
Dhanusha	Jaleswor

Nepali Month	No. of Vehicles		
	Motorcycle	Car/Jeep/Van	Bus
Baishak	705	1982	12
Jestha	655	1830	15
Ashar	500	2119	16
Shrawn	358	908	15
Bhadra	358	708	13
Ashoj	304	708	15
Kartik	594	620	22
Mansir	694	1120	18
Poush	670	757	21
Magh	701	755	22
Falgun	636	1210	20
Chaitra	947	1654	24
Total	7122	14371	213

Motorcycle (1)	No. of Visitors	
	Car/Jeep/Van (5)	Bus (32)
705	9910	384
655	9150	480
500	10595	512
358	4540	480
358	3540	416
304	3540	480
594	3100	704
694	5600	576
670	3785	672
701	3775	704
636	6050	640
947	8270	768
7122	71855	6816

District	Border
Dhanusha	Vittamod

Nepali Month	No. of Vehicles		
	Motorcycle	Car/Jeep/Van	Bus
Baishak	0	0	0
Jestha	0	0	0
Ashar	0	0	0
Shrawn	0	0	0
Bhadra	0	0	0
Ashoj	0	0	0
Kartik	0	0	0
Mansir	0	0	0
Poush	2570	2028	1
Magh	5206	2550	3
Falgun	7597	4255	2
Chaitra	6403	2010	4
Total	21776	10843	10

Motorcycle (1)	No. of Visitors	
	Car/Jeep/Van (5)	Bus (32)
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2570	10140	32
5206	12750	96
7597	21275	64
6403	10050	128
21776	54215	320

District	Border
Jhapa	Kakarvitta

Nepali Month	No. of Vehicles		
	Motorcycle	Car/Jeep/Van	Bus
Baishak	957	1802	15
Jestha	1720	1901	11
Ashar	1465	2030	5
Shrawn	1085	2161	8
Bhadra	1185	1654	0
Ashoj	1382	2095	8
Kartik	1219	1788	20
Mansir	1259	2400	16
Poush	1357	2805	40
Magh	1376	2861	39
Falgun	1456	2799	15
Chaitra	1423	2652	6
Total	15884	26948	183

Motorcycle (1)	No. of Visitors	
	Car/Jeep/Van (5)	Bus (32)
957	9010	480
1720	9505	352
1465	10150	160
1085	10805	256
1185	8270	0
1382	10475	256
1219	8940	640
1259	12000	512
1357	14025	1280
1376	14305	1248
1456	13995	480
1423	13260	192
15884	134740	5856

District	Border
Kanchanpur	Mahendranagar

Nepali Month	No. of Vehicles		
	Motorcycle	Car/Jeep/Van	Bus
Baishak	498	599	6
Jestha	583	604	5
Ashar	536	542	12
Shrawn	452	318	5
Bhadra	482	350	17
Ashoj	553	395	19
Kartik	491	353	25
Mansir	586	615	24
Poush	464	608	24
Magh	486	626	21
Falgun	512	597	19
Chaitra	651	665	31
Total	6294	6272	208

No. of Visitors		
Motorcycle (1)	Car/Jeep/Van (5)	Bus (32)
498	2995	192
583	3020	160
536	2710	384
452	1590	160
482	1750	544
553	1975	608
491	1765	800
586	3075	768
464	3040	768
486	3130	672
512	2985	608
651	3325	992
6294	31360	6656

II. Details of the vehicle entry records in 2072

District	Border
Kailali	Dhangadi

Nepali Month	No. of Vehicles		
	Motorcycle	Car/Jeep/Van	Bus
Baishak	219	449	1
Jestha	411	521	2
Ashar	271	380	1
Shrawn	254	301	2
Bhadra	191	87	2
Ashoj	237	126	2
Kartik	307	276	3
Mansir	275	253	1
Poush	302	412	0
Magh	347	559	0
Falgun	440	618	0
Chaitra	385	550	1

No. of Visitors		
Motorcycle (1)	Car/Jeep/Van (5)	Bus (32)
219	2245	32
411	2605	64
271	1900	32
254	1505	64
191	435	64
237	630	64
307	1380	96
275	1265	32
302	2060	0
347	2795	0
440	3090	0
385	2750	32

Total	3639	4532	15
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3639	22660	480
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District	Border
Banke	Nepalgunj

Nepali Month	No. of Vehicles		
	Motorcycle	Car/Jeep/Van	Bus
Baishak	958	1136	114
Jestha	893	882	38
Ashar	651	586	14
Shrawn	675	527	13
Bhadra	541	127	8
Ashoj	968	429	30
Kartik	865	598	44
Mansir	719	487	20
Poush	879	803	26
Magh	704	833	36
Falgun	1059	1410	93
Chaitra	857	1103	58
Total	9769	8921	494

No. of Visitors		
Motorcycle (1)	Car/Jeep/Van (5)	Bus (32)
958	5680	3648
893	4410	1216
651	2930	448
675	2635	416
541	635	256
968	2145	960
865	2990	1408
719	2435	640
879	4015	832
704	4165	1152
1059	7050	2976
857	5515	1856
9769	44605	15808

District	Border
Rupandehi	Bhairahawa

Nepali Month	No. of Vehicles		
	Motorcycle	Car/Jeep/Van	Bus
Baishak	2208	1302	1107
Jestha	2208	1309	1308
Ashar	2328	1312	1317
Shrawn	2198	1301	1215
Bhadra	2205	1222	1045
Ashoj	1250	630	385
Kartik	703	540	281
Mansir	150	85	22
Poush	72	40	14
Magh	250	130	40
Falgun	2185	1230	297
Chaitra	2012	1198	956
Total	17769	10299	7987

No. of Visitors		
Motorcycle (1)	Car/Jeep/Van (5)	Bus (32)
2208	6510	35424
2208	6545	41856
2328	6560	42144
2198	6505	38880
2205	6110	33440
1250	3150	12320
703	2700	8992
150	425	704
72	200	448
250	650	1280
2185	6150	9504
2012	5990	30592
17769	51495	255584

District	Border
Morang	Biratnagar

Nepali Month	No. of Vehicles		
	Motorcycle	Car/Jeep/Van	Bus
Baishak	478	752	98
Jestha	630	750	57
Ashar	374	587	48
Shrawn	482	884	19
Bhadra	62	2	2
Ashoj	118	1	3
Kartik	146	46	10
Mansir	476	980	45
Poush	786	798	81
Magh	945	1171	172
Falgun	1951	1584	135
Chaitra	931	1340	46
Total	7379	8895	716

Motorcycle (1)	No. of Visitors	
	Car/Jeep/Van (5)	Bus (32)
478	3760	3136
630	3750	1824
374	2935	1536
482	4420	608
62	10	64
118	5	96
146	230	320
476	4900	1440
786	3990	2592
945	5855	5504
1951	7920	4320
931	6700	1472
7379	44475	22912

District	Border
Parsa	Birgunj

Nepali Month	No. of Vehicles		
	Motorcycle	Car/Jeep/Van	Bus
Baishak	1650	1950	150
Jestha	1550	1875	50
Ashar	1075	1040	15
Shrawn	1570	1200	150
Bhadra	450	400	20
Ashoj	650	300	0
Kartik	750	90	0
Mansir	800	180	0
Poush	750	180	0
Magh	80	405	10
Falgun	900	1800	150
Chaitra	1520	1250	140
Total	11745	10670	685

Motorcycle (1)	No. of Visitors	
	Car/Jeep/Van (5)	Bus (32)
1650	9750	4800
1550	9375	1600
1075	5200	480
1570	6000	4800
450	2000	640
650	1500	0
750	450	0
800	900	0
750	900	0
80	2025	320
900	9000	4800
1520	6250	4480
11745	53350	21920

District	Border
Dhanusha	Janakpur

Nepali Month	No. of Vehicles		
	Motorcycle	Car/Jeep/Van	Bus
Baishak	636	1917	20
Jestha	605	1904	10
Ashar	505	1057	10
Shrawn	205	1258	7
Bhadra	21	32	0
Ashoj	0	0	0
Kartik	0	0	0
Mansir	0	0	0
Poush	0	2	0
Magh	105	297	0
Falgun	725	1368	7
Chaitra	402	1190	8
Total	3204	9025	62

Motorcycle (1)	No. of Visitors	
	Car/Jeep/Van (5)	Bus (32)
636	9585	640
605	9520	320
505	5285	320
205	6290	224
21	160	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	10	0
105	1485	0
725	6840	224
402	5950	256
3204	45125	1984

District	Border
Dhanusha	Vittamod

Nepali Month	No. of Vehicles		
	Motorcycle	Car/Jeep/Van	Bus
Baishak	8155	4391	7
Jestha	5891	4347	5
Ashar	3245	2400	2
Shrawn	2126	3575	9
Bhadra	137	60	0
Ashoj	24	0	0
Kartik	0	0	0
Mansir	11	20	0
Poush	247	54	2
Magh	3101	1453	4
Falgun	5103	4751	5
Chaitra	5431	2271	7
Total	33471	23322	41

Motorcycle (1)	No. of Visitors	
	Car/Jeep/Van (5)	Bus (32)
8155	21955	224
5891	21735	160
3245	12000	64
2126	17875	288
137	300	0
24	0	0
0	0	0
11	100	0
247	270	64
3101	7265	128
5103	23755	160
5431	11355	224
33471	116610	1312

District	Border
Jhapa	Kakarvitta

Nepali Month	No. of Vehicles		
	Motorcycle	Car/Jeep/Van	Bus
Baishak	1477	3000	24
Jestha	1683	2034	20
Ashar	1564	2337	6
Shrawn	1831	2604	28
Bhadra	1592	1689	4
Ashoj	1438	1334	7
Kartik	4218	2975	0
Mansir	3886	2511	0
Poush	2928	2636	0
Magh	1671	3124	0
Falgun	1768	3106	0
Chaitra	1840	2864	0
Total	25896	30214	89

Motorcycle (1)	No. of Visitors	
	Car/Jeep/Van (5)	Bus (32)
1477	15000	768
1683	10170	640
1564	11685	192
1831	13020	896
1592	8445	128
1438	6670	224
4218	14875	0
3886	12555	0
2928	13180	0
1671	15620	0
1768	15530	0
1840	14320	0
25896	151070	2848

District	Border
Kanchanpur	Mahendranagar

Nepali Month	No. of Vehicles		
	Motorcycle	Car/Jeep/Van	Bus
Baishak	770	777	39
Jestha	737	842	30
Ashar	541	553	23
Shrawn	544	424	11
Bhadra	586	228	16
Ashoj	372	247	43
Kartik	730	591	47
Mansir	577	477	35
Poush	601	524	97
Magh	613	642	83
Falgun	717	784	74
Chaitra	756	424	11
Total	7544	6513	509

Motorcycle (1)	No. of Visitors	
	Car/Jeep/Van (5)	Bus (32)
770	3885	1248
737	4210	960
541	2765	736
544	2120	352
586	1140	512
372	1235	1376
730	2955	1504
577	2385	1120
601	2620	3104
613	3210	2656
717	3920	2368
756	2120	352
7544	32565	16288

III. Pictures from the fieldwork



जलकूपर		अनु सहाय (दोरी) प्रकल्प पत्र	
क्र.सं.	नाम	पता	संख्या
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प.सं.:- ०६२/०६३
च.नं.:- १६८५

नेपाल सरकार
अर्थ मन्त्रालय

भन्सार विभाग (प्रशासन शाखा)



त्रिपुरेश्वर, काठमाडौं, नेपाल

मिति २०७३/१/१४

विषय : आवश्यक सहयोग गरिदिने सम्बन्धमा ।

श्री मेची , बिराटनगर, जनकपुर, विरगंज,भैरहवा,
नेपालगंज, कैलाली र कन्चनपुर भन्सार कार्यालय ।

नेपाल पर्यटन बोर्डको मिति २०७३/०१/१२ को प्राप्त पत्रको प्रतिलिपी यसैसाथ संलग्न छ । पत्रबाट लेखिआए
बमोजिम आवश्यक सहयोग हुन आदेशानुसार अनुरोध छ ।

बोधार्थ

श्री नेपाल पर्यटन बोर्ड , भृकुटीमण्डप ।


रोमकान्त कर्पले
शाखा अधिकृत

