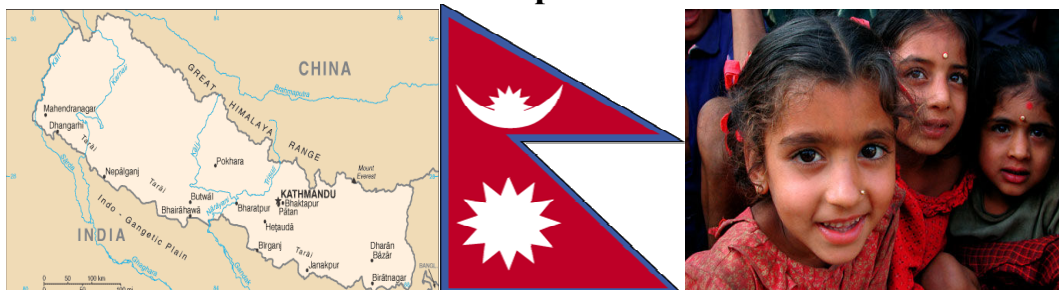




## Nepal



**Capital City:** Kathmandu

**Background:** In 1951, the Nepalese monarch ended the century-old system of rule by hereditary premiers and instituted a cabinet system of government. Reforms in 1990 established a multiparty democracy within the framework of a constitutional monarchy. A Maoist insurgency, launched in 1996, gained traction and threatened to bring down the regime, especially after a negotiated cease-fire between the Maoists and government forces broke down in August 2003. In 2001, the crown prince massacred ten members of the royal family, including the king and queen, and then took his own life. In October 2002, the new king dismissed the prime minister and his cabinet for "incompetence" after they dissolved the parliament and were subsequently unable to hold elections because of the ongoing insurgency. While stopping short of reestablishing parliament, the king in June 2004 reinstated the most recently elected prime minister who formed a four-party coalition government. Citing dissatisfaction with the government's lack of progress in addressing the Maoist insurgency and corruption, the king in February 2005 dissolved the government, declared a state of emergency, imprisoned party leaders, and assumed power. The king's government subsequently released party leaders and officially ended the state of emergency in May 2005, but the monarch retained absolute power until April 2006. After nearly three weeks of mass protests organized by the seven-party opposition and the Maoists, the king allowed parliament to reconvene on 28 April 2006. Following the November 2006 peace accord between the government and the Maoists, an interim constitution was promulgated and the Maoists were allowed to enter parliament in mid-January 2007. Parliamentary elections, originally planned for June 2007, were postponed to November 2007.

### Geography:

- **Location:** Southern Asia, between China and India.
- **Area Comparative:** Twice the size of Ireland
- **Climate:** Varies from cool summers and severe winters in north to subtropical summers and mild winters in south.
- **Natural Resources:** Quartz, water, timber, hydropower, scenic beauty, small deposits of lignite, copper, cobalt, iron ore.
- **Natural Hazards:** Severe thunderstorms, flooding, landslides, drought and famine depending on the timing, intensity and duration of the summer monsoons.
- **Environmental Issues:** Deforestation, contaminated water, wildlife conservation, vehicular emissions.



### People:

- **Population:** 28,901,790
- **Birth rate:** 30.46 births per 1000 population
- **Infant mortality:** 63.66 deaths per 1000 live births
- **Life expectancy:** *Total population:* 60.56 years, *male:* 60.78 years, *female* 60.33 years.

**Religion:** Hindu 80.6%, Buddhist 10.7%, Muslim 4.2%, Kirant 3.6%

*note:* only official Hindu state in the world.

### Government:

- **Type of government:** Parliamentary Democracy.
- **Administrative divisions:** 14 zones.
- **Independence:** 1768
- **National Holiday:** In 2006, Parliament abolished the birthday of King GYANENDRA (7 July) and Constitution Day (9 November) as national holidays.

### Economy:

- **Unemployment:** 42% (2004 estimate).
- **Population below the poverty line:** 31%
- **Agricultural products:** Rice, corn, sugarcane, jute, root crops, milk, water buffalo meat.
- **Industries:** Tourism, carpet, textile; small rice, jute, sugar, and oilseed mills; cigarettes, cement and brick production.

### Education:

- **Literacy:** *Definition:* age 15 and over can read and write. *Total population:* 48.6%, *male:* 62.7%, *female* 34.9%.
- **Languages:** Nepali, Maithali, Bhojpuri, Tharu (Dagaura/Rana), Tamang, Newar, Magar

### Communication

- **Telephone lines:** *Landlines:* 595,800, *mobile:* 1.042 million.
- **TV Stations:** 1.
- **Internet users:** 249,400.

**Asylum:** According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) statistics in 2005 there were fewer than 100 asylum claims in Ireland by Nepali nationals.

**Internally Displaced Persons:** According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, in July 2007 between 50,000 and 70,000 persons remained internally displaced in Nepal

**Migration:** In the first five months of 2007 the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment issued 56 work permits to Nepali nationals.

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