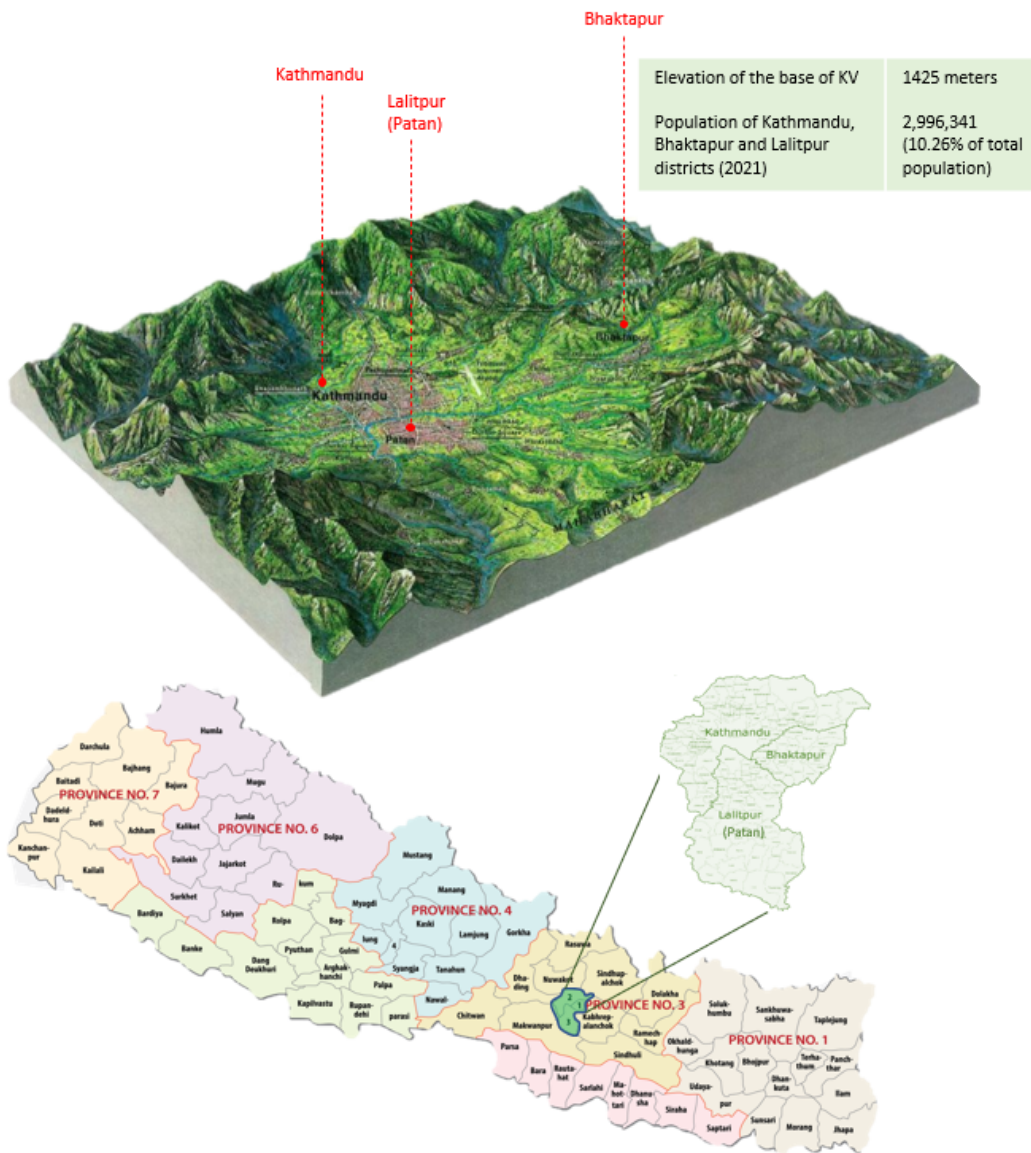


## Urban Transport Management in Kathmandu Valley, Nepal

JICA started “The Project for Introduction of Urban Transport Management in Kathmandu Valley” in 2022, which focuses on intersection improvement in the Kathmandu Valley (KV). It is a bowl-shaped valley in Nepal and is surrounded by the Himalayan mountains. Inside the KV, there are three prominent districts- Kathmandu, Lalitpur, or, Patan and Bhaktapur. During the first visit, I stayed in Lalitpur, also known as Patan.



**Figure: Kathmandu, Lalitpur (Patan) and Bhaktapur districts in Kathmandu Valley of Bagmati Province. (sources: Nepal Statistical Bureau, NatGeoMap)**

Inside KV, 107 intersections are preliminarily identified for the intersection improvement and strategically they are categorized into 17 groups based on the similarities of the characteristics of the intersections for further study. As a part of the pilot project, two prominent intersections are now under the process of selection. Being a member of the working group related to traffic safety improvement, I got the chance to visit and observe two candidate intersections for the pilot project namely New Baneshwar and Gaushala intersections.



**Figure: New Baneshwar (left) and Gaushala (right) intersections**

A few major observations at the intersections in KV are- generally the intersections are very closely spaced, most of the traffic lights are in inoperable condition. Traffic police control the traffic manually and the traffic light is set to yellow all the time. The left turning traffic flow is always prioritized, meaning, no matter the traffic signal is the left turning vehicles are allowed to go. The main public transports are buses, micro buses, tempos etc. Buses and tempos have 6 and 3 reserved seats respectively for females, elders and disabled persons. Motorcycles and the ride- share Application "Pathao" is popular in the KV. But there is no regulation of use of helmets for the pillion drivers and almost no pillion driver wears helmet. The sidewalks are not suitable for walking, especially for the elders, children and disabled persons. Additionally, the pedestrian crossing duration deems to be insufficient considering the vulnerable users.



**Figure: Yellow light is always turned on, 3 reserved seats for females in tempos**



**Figure: Sidewalks require reconstruction to accommodate the vulnerable users**



**Figure: Pillion drivers (back seat riders of motorcycle) do not wear helmets**

This project aims to improve the intersections by addressing the above issues and by inducing behavioral changes through education, training in the coming years.

**Summary:**

Kathmandu Valley (KV) is home to about 2.9 million people has several issues related to traffic congestion, traffic management and safety. This JICA- funded project aims to address those issues and improve intersections by employing proper traffic signal management system, by providing training and education to relevant agencies. And, finally, by raising awareness to follow traffic rules and change behavior to ensure safer roads and transports for everyone including the vulnerable users, i.e. females, children, elders and disabled persons.