

Tihar and Beyond

Description

Last week Rick touched on Tihar, the festival of light, which started on Saturday. The festival continued until Wednesday and it was interesting to be able take part in some of the celebrations. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday were national holidays so we couldn't do much work.

Here are the traditional daily celebrations:

1-Crow; the messenger of death of the god Yama. Crows are fed special treats on rooftops to appease them and to ward off death and grief for the coming year.

2-Dog; honored and worshipped by offering special treats, giving tika and garlands. It celebrates the special relationship between human and dog and the need for a dog in passing through the gates of Svarga.

3-Cow; people show their gratitude to the cow for their gentle nature and all they give by feeding them treats and worshipping them with tikas and garlands. On this day Lakshmi is welcomed into the home with rangoli and footprints that lead the way. Lights are draped on houses and small oil lamps are placed around the home because it is believed the goddess won't visit a dark home. She is worshipped with chanting, prayers and offerings to bring wealth, prosperity and good health.

4-Ox; worshipped and celebrated because of the labor it performs in the agricultural communities of Nepal.



Prayers are performed to bless and create a protective barrier with water, oil and a makhamali flower garland. Gifts are exchanged as well.





ted several beautiful



is a pretty good dog and we enjoy his
our doorstep!

Even street dogs are honored...



One evening we had music and dancing on our neighborhood street.



We saw the lights in the surrounding area from the rooftop.



There were rangoli all along the way as we took our morning walks. Some were quite elaborate.

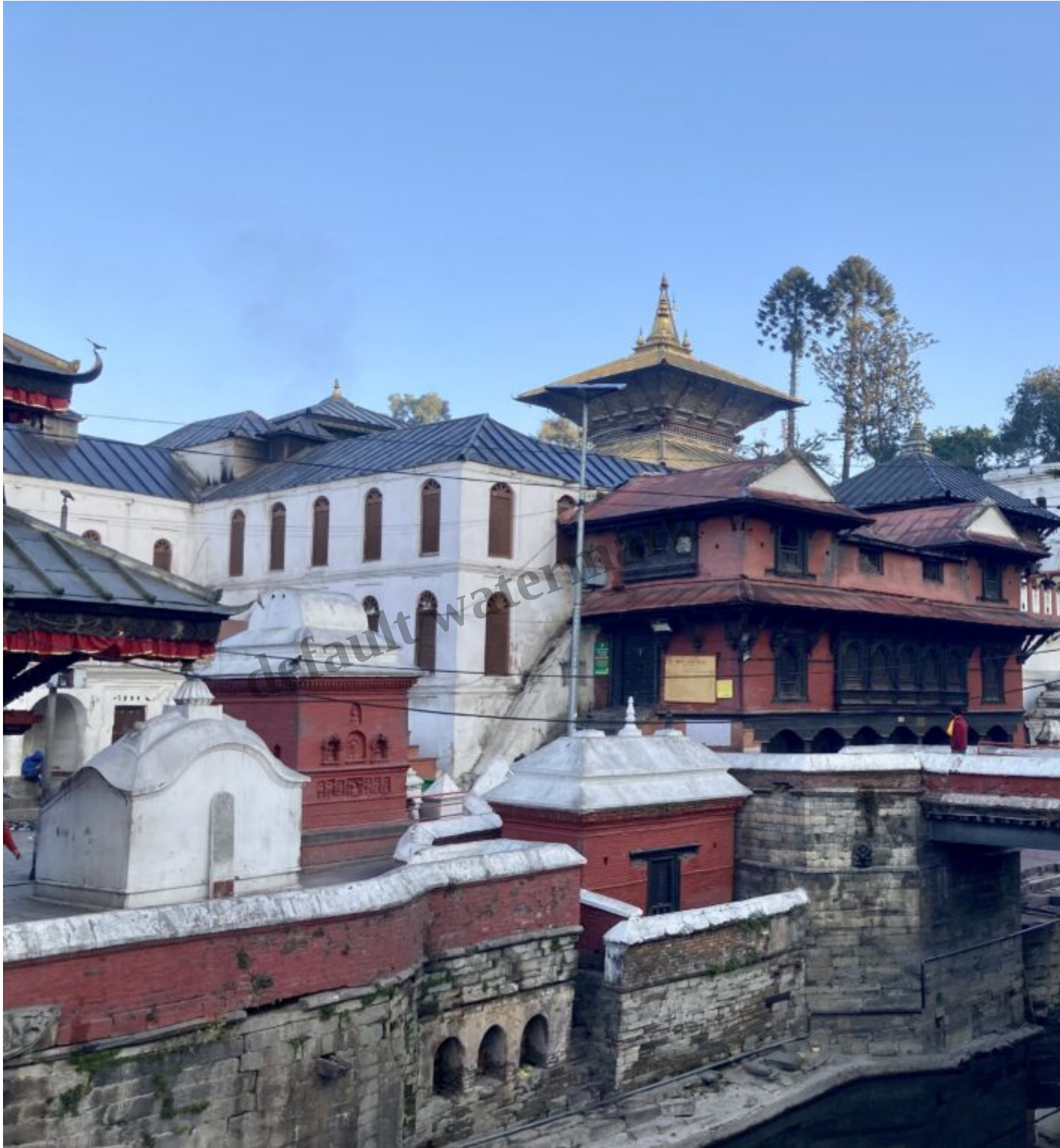


As with all things, the fun of the festival came to an end as did the late night singing, dancing, chanting, shouting and fireworks. It was nice to be able to get back to work since we will be leaving for Thailand on Monday.

Our trekker, Will, returned from a successful adventure and spent the night before leaving Kathmandu. We went through Pashupati on our morning walk on Friday and saw lots of monkeys and other interesting things.



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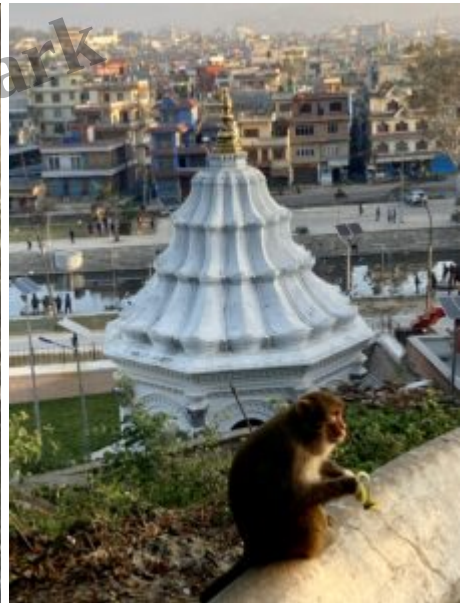
The gold spire is on top of the main Hindu temple, Pashupatinath. This is a very sacred place for the wide to visit. They do cremations here and put the ashes into the sacred, but filthy, Bagmati river.



Funeral pyre beginning to burn and wood laid out on other platforms in preparation



An impressive bull wandering the grounds





With people back to the office and ready to work on Friday we were able to tie up some loose ends on our Helping Babies Breath training that is rapidly approaching. We also made some headway on some other projects. It is good to be working and useful. It's what we want to be doing.

Luke 9:24 says, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it."

We hope you have a wonderful Thanksgiving. We will think of you eating turkey with all the trimmings while we enjoy a nice plate of Pad Thai!

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