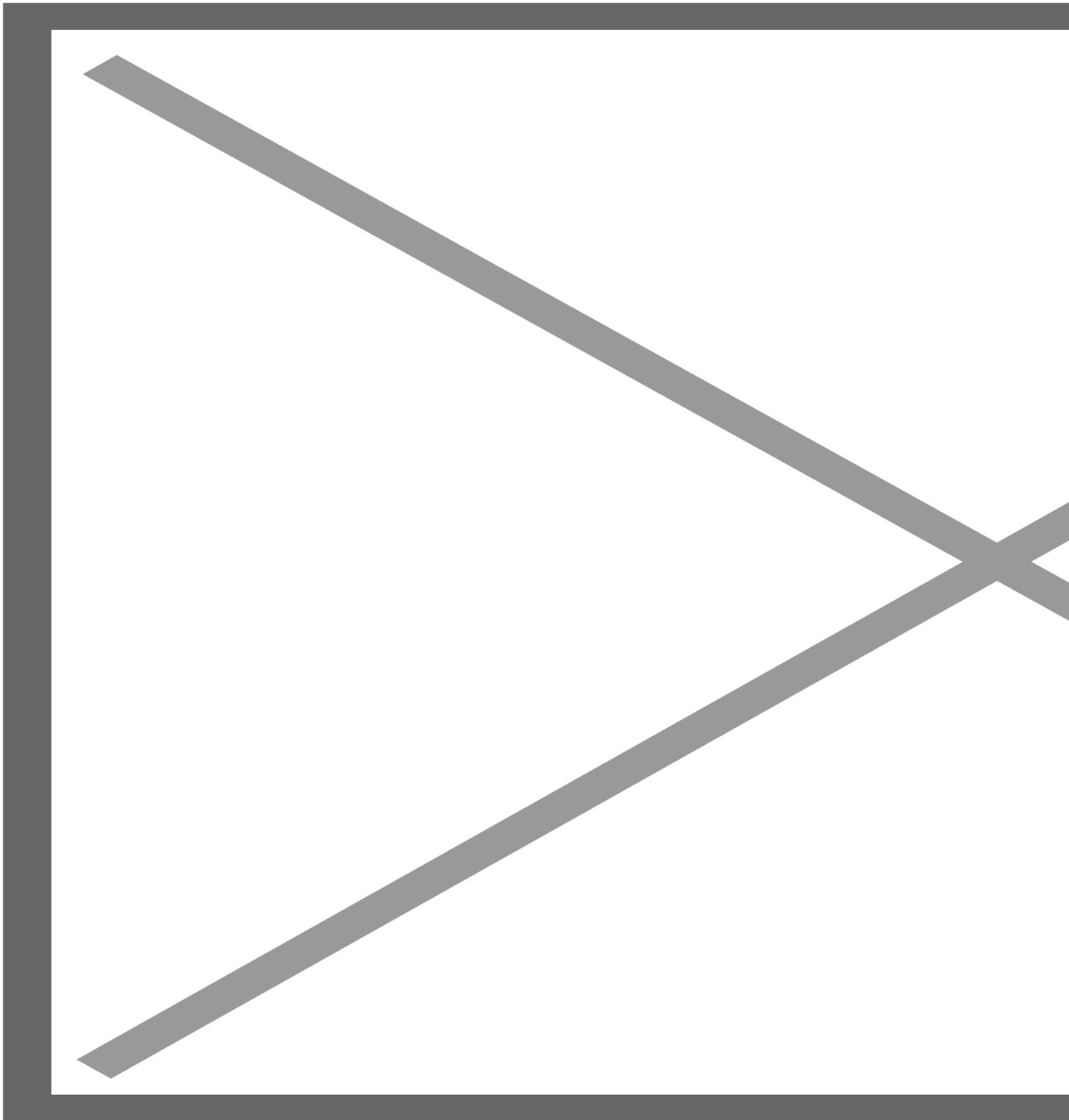


# 68 killed after Nepal plane crashes during landing

January 15, 2023

**The Daily Morning Voice Online Desk:** Authorities in Nepal said 68 people have been confirmed dead after a regional passenger plane with 72 aboard crashed into a gorge while landing at a newly opened airport in the resort town of Pokhara, reports the Associated Press. It was the country's deadliest airplane accident in three decades. Tek Bahadur K. C., a senior administrative officer in the Kaski district, made the announcement Sunday while rescuers were scouring the crash site near the Seti River, about 1.6 kilometres from Pokhara International Airport.

At the crash site, rescuers used ropes to pull out bodies from the wreckage. Some bodies, burned beyond recognition, were carried by firefighters to hospitals, where grief-stricken relatives had assembled. Bahadur said he expected rescue workers to find more victims at the bottom of the gorge. It was not immediately clear what caused the plane to crash. The twin-engine ATR 72 aircraft, operated by Nepal's Yeti Airlines, was flying from the capital, Kathmandu, to Pokhara, a 27-minute flight. It was carrying 68 passengers including 15 foreign nationals, as well as four crew members, Nepal's Civil Aviation Authority said in a statement. The foreigners included five Indians, four Russians, two South Koreans, and one each from Ireland, Australia, Argentina and France. The aviation authority said the aircraft last made contact with the airport from near Seti Gorge at 10:50 a.m. before crashing.



Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal, who rushed to the airport after the crash, set up a panel to investigate the accident. “The incident was tragic. The full force of the Nepali army, police has been deployed for rescue,” he said.

Pokhara, located 200 kilometres west of Kathmandu, is the gateway to the Annapurna Circuit, a popular hiking trail in the Himalayas. Pokhara International Airport began operations only two weeks ago. It was built with Chinese construction and financial support. The Chinese ambassador to Nepal, Chen Song, said in a tweet he was “very shocked” to learn of the accident.

Sunday’s crash is Nepal’s deadliest since 1992, when all 167 people aboard a Pakistan International Airlines plane were killed when it plowed into a hill as it tried to land in Kathmandu. Nepal, home to eight of the world’s 14 highest mountains, including Mount Everest, has a history of air crashes. According to the Flight

Safety Foundation's Aviation Safety database, there have been 42 fatal plane crashes in Nepal since 1946.