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What began as a teenager's attempt to help people navigate strikes and power cuts has grown into one of Nepal's most influential digital information platforms. Behind Routine of Nepal Banda is Victor Poudel—a founder whose story also traces the transformation of how a generation of Nepalis consumes news.

Long before “breaking news” became something Nepalis expected to see first on Facebook, Instagram or TikTok, a school-leaver in

Kathmandu noticed a much simpler problem: people often did not know whether the city would be open the next morning.

It was 2011. Nepal was navigating a turbulent political transition, and strikes—*bandas*—could disrupt roads, schools and businesses with little warning. Students sometimes waited for buses that never arrived. Commuters could leave home only to discover transport had stopped. Load-shedding was also part of daily life, making electricity schedules essential information.

For **Victor Poudel**, then a teenager from Baglung who had moved to Kathmandu after completing his SLC, that information gap was difficult to ignore. At around 16, he created a Facebook page with a name that was simultaneously descriptive and quietly satirical: **Routine of Nepal Banda**, or RONB.

There was no newsroom, large staff or elaborate business plan.

There was a practical question: *What is happening outside, and can people safely go where they need to go?*

Poudel has recalled calling traffic police to confirm road conditions before posting updates. He had also spent time around football journalism and online sports pages, experiences that helped sharpen his instinct for fast-moving digital information.

That instinct would eventually help turn a simple Facebook page into something much larger.

A Page Built Around Everyday Problems

RONB's original advantage was not sophisticated investigative journalism.

It was **usefulness**.

A strike notice mattered because it determined whether someone could reach work. A load-shedding timetable mattered because families needed to plan around electricity cuts. A traffic update could save someone an hour. A request for blood could connect a hospital patient with a donor.

These were often relatively small pieces of information overlooked by conventional media, but they affected everyday life directly.

That gap became RONB's territory.

Poudel also understood something about internet culture before many established newsrooms fully adapted to it: people scrolling Facebook did not necessarily want information presented in the language of a newspaper.

RONB began communicating in **Roman Nepali and simple English**, frequently using the conversational language people were already using with friends online. Rather than long articles, the page specialised in compressed updates—sometimes just a handful of sentences.

The objective was simple: make information feel immediate, understandable and familiar.

That tone became part of RONB's identity.

But something else was happening at the same time: the audience itself was becoming part of the reporting network.

As the page grew, followers began sending photographs, local updates, missing-person notices and reports from different parts of Nepal. RONB could receive large volumes of messages every day, turning its inbox into a continuously updating stream of information from citizens across the country.

RONB had effectively built a form of crowdsourced information gathering.

It looked less like a traditional newspaper and more like a national group chat—except one account had the power to determine which messages millions of people would eventually see.

The Earthquake That Changed the Scale

RONB had already established an audience when the **2015 earthquake** transformed the importance of real-time digital information.

During a disaster, information is no longer simply content. People need to know where damage has occurred, where assistance is

required and what is happening in communities beyond their immediate surroundings.

Poudel has recalled continuing to update RONB even as tremors were occurring, sometimes relying on friends abroad to post when circumstances in Nepal made it difficult for him to continue.

The earthquake period became one of the platform's major turning points.

The crisis demonstrated one of RONB's structural advantages.

Traditional publishers generally produced an article and then distributed a link to it through social media.

RONB frequently treated **the social-media post itself as the finished product**.

No extra click was required. No long article had to load. The essential information appeared directly in someone's feed.

It was an approach perfectly suited to the emerging smartphone era.

The Architecture of Attention

RONB's success is therefore more than a story about Facebook.

It is a story about **attention**.

Poudel recognised that people increasingly encountered events through headlines, notifications and short updates rather than by reading complete newspaper reports. Instead of fighting that behaviour, RONB designed its publishing model around it.

Its feed evolved into a mixture of current affairs, public-service announcements, sports, photographs, achievements, missing-person appeals, humour, human-interest stories and posts frequently framed around positive developments.

The result did not resemble the traditional front page.

It resembled the rhythm of social media itself.

Serious information could be followed by an inspiring story. A political development could sit next to a photograph of Nepal's landscape. A sporting achievement might be followed by a public warning or blood-donation request.

That variety helped RONB become part of the everyday scrolling habits of Nepalis both inside the country and across the diaspora.

By 2026, its combined following across Facebook, Instagram, X, TikTok and YouTube had reached many millions. Those numbers overlap across platforms, but the broader point is clear: RONB had become one of Nepal's most visible digital information brands.

For something that began with shutdown information, it represents a remarkable transformation.

Influence Without the Old Newsroom Walls

But scale introduces a more difficult question.

What standards should apply when a social-media page becomes powerful enough to perform many of the functions traditionally associated with a national news organisation?

RONB occupies an unusual space.

It is simultaneously an information service, social-media publisher, community noticeboard, advertising platform and media organisation.

That flexibility contributed to its success. It also explains much of the criticism surrounding it.

Media observers have argued that extremely short pieces of information risk becoming incomplete when they lack sufficient context. Critics have also raised questions around sourcing, image credits, grammatical standards and the use of descriptions such as “good news,” “sad news” or “wow” that can introduce editorial framing into posts presented as information.

This is the unavoidable trade-off behind RONB's greatest innovation.

Compression makes information accessible.

Compression can also remove context.

The same two sentences capable of explaining a simple traffic disruption may be inadequate for explaining a complicated economic, legal or political event.

When Attention Becomes Political

The consequences became particularly visible as RONB's influence entered Nepal's political conversation.

During and after **Balendra “Balen” Shah's 2022 Kathmandu mayoral campaign**, questions were raised about the amount of visibility the platform gave him. Political figures and media commentators debated whether RONB's coverage amounted to disproportionate attention, while Poudel said his support for Shah was personal and that the page also published material concerning other candidates.

The episode illustrates a larger reality of digital publishing.

Once millions of people rely on a platform, deciding **what to publish, how often to publish it and what not to publish** becomes an editorial function—even when the platform continues

to see itself as a noticeboard.

RONB faced another major test in 2023, when its principal social accounts briefly went silent amid intense online criticism and debate about credibility and accountability.

Its eventual return demonstrated both the pressure surrounding the platform and the strength of the relationship it had built with its audience.

From One Admin to a Media Operation

The RONB of today is far removed from a teenager managing Facebook updates between classes.

By 2026, Poudel had described an operation involving roughly 20 people in different capacities, including a Kathmandu-based team and volunteers.

RONB has expanded across major social networks, developed longer-form content through RONB Post, entered livestreaming and worked with events and commercial partners.

Its development is particularly interesting because it reverses the usual evolution of a media company.

Traditional newspapers began with long articles and later had to learn how to shorten them for social media.

RONB began with the social post.

Only later did it expand toward websites, video, livestreaming and more conventional forms of organised media.

Commercialisation has followed its growth as well. Poudel has said RONB rejects a substantial portion of advertising proposals because excessive advertising could frustrate the audience.

Critics, however, argue that digital publishers need clearer distinctions between ordinary editorial posts, promotional material and advertising.

For a platform whose most valuable asset is public trust, that distinction will remain important.

Beyond RONB

Poudel's ambitions also appear to be evolving.

He has spoken about eventually developing RONB as a **non-profit citizen-journalism platform** that would depend less heavily—or perhaps not at all—on advertising.

To finance that vision, he has discussed separate commercial activities, including digital-media consulting and **E-Karmakanda**, a startup designed to help people arrange Hindu religious rituals and related services.

Whether separate ventures can generate enough revenue to make a media platform of RONB's scale genuinely advertisement-free remains an open business question.

But the idea reveals something important about Poudel's view of the platform.

Despite its reach, staff and commercial value, he has repeatedly returned to a surprisingly modest description of what he wants RONB to remain:

A digital noticeboard.

Public Service Became Part of the Brand

RONB's importance grew because it was not limited to conventional news. Blood requests, missing-person notices, traffic disruptions, exam updates, weather warnings and emergency appeals all fit naturally into a feed designed around usefulness. The page became valuable precisely because it did not insist that every important post had to resemble a newspaper story.

This public-service function helped create unusually strong audience habits. People were not following only for politics or entertainment; they were following because the page might contain something practical enough to affect the next hour of their day. That kind of utility is one of the strongest forms of media loyalty because it is built through repeated usefulness rather than

occasional spectacle.

Crowdsourcing Created Reach—and a Verification Problem

As the audience expanded, RONB's inbox effectively became a distributed reporting network. People in different districts could send photographs, local incidents, road conditions and appeals before a professional reporter could reach the scene. This gave the platform speed and geographic reach that a small newsroom would struggle to reproduce through staff alone.

The same model creates a central editorial challenge: information sent by an audience is not automatically information ready to publish. Photographs can be old, locations can be misidentified and eyewitness accounts can conflict. A platform built on crowdsourcing therefore needs verification systems strong enough to preserve the speed that made the model useful without allowing speed to become the reason a false claim spreads nationally.

The mature version of citizen-sourced publishing is not simply “people send us things.” It is a workflow in which staff know what can be verified quickly, what needs another source, what should wait and what should not be published at all.

Language Was Part of the Innovation

RONB's use of Roman Nepali, simple English and conversational phrasing helped make digital information feel native to the way young Nepalis were already writing online. That choice lowered the psychological distance between the page and its audience. The post did not sound like an institution speaking down to readers; it sounded closer to the language of a group chat.

There is a trade-off. Conversational language can be accessible while becoming imprecise when complex subjects require technical terms or careful qualification. The challenge is not choosing between formal and informal language permanently. It is knowing when simplicity improves understanding and when it begins removing necessary meaning.

The Diaspora Expanded the Noticeboard

RONB's audience is not confined to Nepal. Nepalis abroad follow the same posts to understand what is happening at home, which gives the page a transnational function unusual for older local media. A traffic update may be irrelevant to somebody in Sydney, but a major disaster, sporting win, social debate or public appeal travels immediately across the diaspora.

This makes the feed part news source, part cultural connection. People living abroad encounter the rhythm of Nepal through the

same mix of seriousness, humour, achievement and everyday notices that users see inside the country. The platform therefore helps maintain a sense of immediacy across distance.

Attention Has Commercial Value

Once a platform reaches millions of people, attention itself becomes a business asset. Brands want access to the audience, event organisers want promotion and commercial partners value a distribution channel that can place information directly in front of large numbers of users.

This is where editorial transparency becomes especially important. A sponsored post should be clearly distinguishable from an ordinary update, and a commercial relationship should not quietly shape how a subject is framed. The more a platform resembles a public information service, the stronger the need to make commercial content legible to readers.

Advertising Is Also an Audience-Retention Problem

Poudel has said RONB rejects many advertising proposals because too much promotion could damage the user experience. That is not only an ethical judgment; it is also sound platform economics. An audience that feels every third post is an advertisement will eventually stop treating the feed as useful.

The difficult balance is funding the operation without consuming the trust that makes the operation valuable. Digital publishers everywhere face the same problem, but RONB's compressed format makes the distinction between editorial and promotion especially important because there is little surrounding context to signal the difference.

The Need for a Correction Culture

Fast publishing guarantees that mistakes will happen. The real institutional question is what happens next. Mature media organisations create visible correction practices so readers can understand what changed and why, rather than silently editing a post after an error has already circulated.

A clear correction culture would fit naturally with RONB's identity as a public noticeboard. The same simplicity that makes updates easy to read can make corrections easy to understand: what was wrong, what is now verified and when the change was made.

Image Credit and Ownership Matter More at Scale

Citizen-sourced photographs create another responsibility. A useful image may be sent by a follower, copied from another account or reposted rapidly during an emergency. As reach grows, credit and permission become increasingly important because the

platform can distribute one person's work to millions.

Clear attribution is not a minor professional detail. It recognises the labour of photographers and helps audiences trace where visual evidence came from. In a digital environment flooded with recycled images, provenance is part of verification.

RONB Is Now an Institution Whether It Uses the Word or Not

Poudel's preference for calling RONB a noticeboard captures its original spirit, but scale changes the practical meaning of the platform. Once millions of people rely on one account, editorial choices acquire institutional consequences even if the organisation remains culturally informal.

That does not require RONB to copy newspapers. Its strength came from inventing a different form. The next stage is building enough structure—verification, corrections, sourcing, commercial disclosure and role clarity—that the form can carry national influence responsibly.

The Challenge of Building Beyond the Founder

Founder-led media organisations often benefit from one person's instinct and suffer from the same concentration of judgment. As teams grow, editorial standards need to become teachable rather

than dependent on the founder seeing every post personally.

This is the transition from personality-driven publishing to institution-building. The platform becomes more durable when staff can make consistent decisions using shared rules, and when readers can understand those rules without needing to know who happened to be managing the feed that day.

Why RONB Still Matters in a Short-Video Era

The digital environment that helped RONB grow has changed again. TikTok, Reels and short-form video compete with Facebook feeds, while audiences increasingly expect visual explanation rather than text alone. The page therefore has to adapt without abandoning the compressed utility that made it distinctive.

Its advantage is not one platform. It is the habit of translating events into quickly understandable information. If that habit can move across formats while keeping standards strong, the brand can remain useful even as the dominant social network changes.

The Man Behind a New Media Habit

Victor Poudel did not invent citizen journalism, social media or short-form news.

His achievement was recognising how those elements could fit together in Nepal at precisely the moment the country's information habits were changing.

RONB grew because it answered practical questions quickly.

Then it survived because it changed when those questions changed.

Bandas became less frequent, so the platform expanded beyond shutdown updates. Load-shedding gradually disappeared, so other public information filled the feed. Facebook was joined by Instagram, X, TikTok and YouTube. A teenage project became a media operation.

Yet RONB's greatest strength remains inseparable from its greatest vulnerability:

compression.

A complicated country is often reduced to a few lines on a screen.

Done well, that makes information extraordinarily accessible.

Done poorly, it can remove context, blur the distinction between journalism and promotion, or give enormous importance to an editorial decision that appears casual.

That means the next chapter of Victor Poudel's story may not simply be about making RONB bigger.

It may be about building stronger institutions around the influence it already possesses—clearer sourcing, stronger verification, greater commercial transparency and sharper distinctions between factual information, editorial framing and promotion.

What began in 2011 as a response to Nepal's culture of shutdowns has, fifteen years later, become part of Nepal's **media culture**.

And there is an appropriate irony in that transformation.

Routine of Nepal Banda was created because people were tired of not knowing what would happen tomorrow.

Today, millions open their phones and look toward the platform for essentially the same reason:

The long-term test is therefore no longer whether RONB can attract attention; that has been settled. The harder test is whether the organisation can turn attention into a durable public-information institution with standards strong enough to match its reach. If it can, Victor Poudel's most important achievement may be less the invention of one popular page than the creation of a distinctly Nepali model of digital-first public information.

That responsibility will only grow as artificial intelligence, synthetic images and recycled clips make online verification harder. A platform built around speed will increasingly need tools and editorial habits for checking authenticity before amplification.

RONB's next advantage may come not from posting first, but from becoming known for knowing when not to post yet.

The strongest future version of that habit is one in which speed and trust reinforce each other rather than compete. If RONB can make verification, corrections and commercial transparency as recognisable as its conversational tone, the platform can remain useful even as the social networks carrying it change again.

Nepal's wider shift toward digital-first public life is also visible in the story of Biswas Dhakal, F1Soft and eSewa.

to find out what is happening next, and why it matters right now.

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