

# **Between Regulation and Expression:**

*Lessons from Nepal's TikTok Ban on Internet Governance*

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ICANN NextGen



# What Actually Happened in Nepal?



Registration Compliance



Non-Registration of TikTok only



Government Collapse

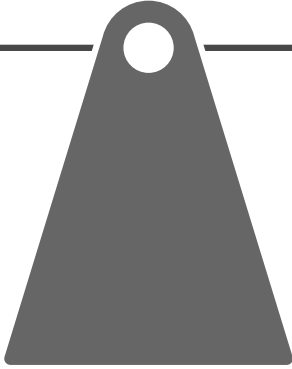


Possible Protest Suppression



**Recent Scenario**  
*(Sept 2025)*

**Previous Scenario**  
*(Nov 2023 – Aug 2024)*



# The Rolpa Story

Imagine traveling half a day, on dangerous mountain mountain roads, just to pay a \$0.56 electricity bill.

*\$0.56 = €0.49 = £0.42*



# **Before Internet - The Daily Reality**

Miss a payment deadline? Your power gets cut off, leaving families in darkness with no recourse.

# **After Internet – The Transformation**

Pay electricity bills in minutes on a phone — no more dangerous journeys or overnight stays  
overnight stays away from family.

But one more thing happened.

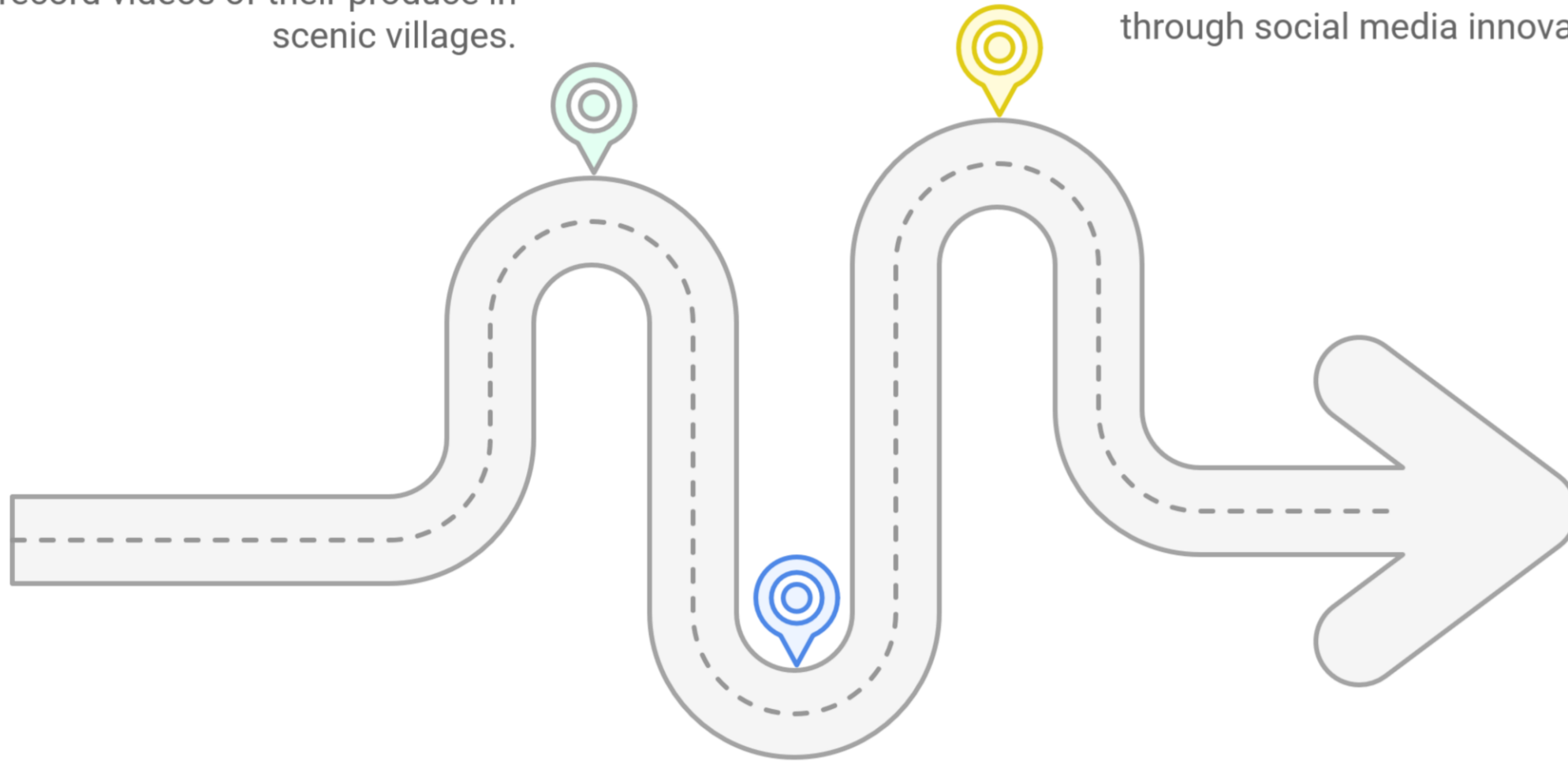
**THE ECONOMY THRIVED!**

## Farmers Videos

Farmers record videos of their produce in scenic villages.

## Sustainable Income

Rural communities achieve sustainable income through social media innovation.



## City Shopkeepers Order

City shopkeepers watch TikToks and place direct orders with villagers.

# The TikTok Ban Shock

*“ If TikTok can vanish overnight, what about our electricity payments? What about our businesses? ”*

*“ Will the government ban the use of INTERNET eventually? ”*



# **Fear rippled through villages**

One government decision, and the whole digital bridge they relied on felt shaky.



**Country A**  
Bans TikTok, WeChat

**Country B**  
Blocks Facebook, Twitter

**Country C**  
Restricts YouTube, Instagram

*Communication between people is damaged when you ban an app – **Tiktok was an EXAMPLE.***

**ICANN ≠ Content Regulator**

# ICANN's Multistakeholder Model

## Nepal's Approach vs ICANN's Approach

*The internet is too important to be ruled by one voice.*

# Toward a Nepal Internet Steering Committee

*Inspired from Brazil's CGI.br (Brazilian Internet Steering Committee)*

A Nepali model — open, participatory, resilient.

# Anupam Gautam

