

Headlines Himalaya

October 28- November 03, 2015 No. 376

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For the 376th issue, we reviewed 25 news reports from 12 sources and selected 26 happenings in five countries. In Nepal, tourist flow has been decreasing while national park is reopened in Assam, India and migratory birds arrive in Kashmir, northern India. In Tibet, China, biggest hydropower plant has been completed and crops are damaged by wild animals in Bhutan.

Headlines Himalaya, a weekly e-News is an attempt to keep our global readers abreast with the happenings in the Himalaya. Please share it with your colleagues and friends. Also, subscription is free. Enjoy!

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DECLINE OF TOURIST IN POKHARA

Many foreign tourists canceled their trips because of negative media coverage of April 25 earthquake and undeclared economic blockade by India in Pokhara, western Nepal. Around 40 percent of tourists visiting Pokhara in this season are domestic tourists. Moreover there have been problems in hotel *services due to the shortage* of liquefied petroleum (LP) gas as well as diesel and petrol. Around 700 boats were in use in the lakes last year but this year there are only around 100 boats and only a few of them were getting passengers.

October 28

<http://www.myrepublica.com/economy/story/30231/pokhara-wears-deserted-look-in-peak-tourist-season.html>

HOSPITALS AFFECTED BY FUEL SHORTAGE

The proprietors of hospitals have demanded the government to ease the regular supply of petroleum products to provide health care services to the patients in Morang district of eastern Nepal. The highly-essential services of the hospital were affected due to lack of sufficient fuels and asked the government to provide the petroleum products in an accessible manner. The surgery, ICU service, CCU, hemodialysis, x-ray, video x-ray, ECG lab and other services were affected.

October 28

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2015-10-28/hospitals-facing-acute-fuel-shortage-due-to-indias-blockade.html>

PADDY CROPS DESTROYED

The irregular rainfall had destroyed paddy crops in Dhangadi of far-western region of Nepal. Initially, the drought has interrupted the growth of crops and also affected the crops ready for harvest which had been soaked by the winter rain. The District Agricultural Development Officer statistics showed that 71,000 hector area of the land in the district had been cultivated and only 40 percent of the crop had been safely harvested this year.

October 29

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/winter-rain-destroys-paddy-crops-in-far-west/>

PONDS AT THE RISK

The two ponds named Jorpokhari of Panchthar district, eastern Nepal which have religious importance and potential to attract tourists were at the stage of disappearance due to the construction of roads nearby without proper management. Although different measures have been implemented to conserve it, efforts without proper plan have not yielded results. Land encroachment, construction of road and lack of proper management of the floodwater during the rainy season were the main reason for the destruction of ponds.

October 29, 2015

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/twin-ponds-of-panchthar-on-verge-of-extinction/>

DAILY WAGEEARNERS SUFFER

Prolonged protest and Banda enforced by the Madhes-based parties in the Terai has badly affected many daily wage workers in the region. Many daily wage workers from districts like Sarlahi, Rautahat, Bara and Parsa have started migrating to other districts in search of work because they were jobless for more than two months. Some of them have arrived in Chitwan where they are employed by local farm owners for paddy harvesting.

October 29

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2015-10-29/madhes-protest-hits-daily-wage-workers.html>

ELECTRONIC RICKSHAW POPULAR

In the fuel crisis situation, electronic rickshaw has become an effective alternative means of transportation in Chitwan, central region of Nepal. The electronic rickshaw has come into operation here since last few months with the Bharatpur sub-metropolitan city easing its registration. A total 304 e-rickshaws are in operation within Bharatpur sub-metropolis and 22 e-rickshaws are providing service in Ratnanagar town area. As it does not use any petroleum products the e-rickshaw is considered environment-friendly and alternative source of transportation.

October 29

<http://www.myrepublica.com/society/story/30295/e-rickshaw-gaining-popularity-in-chitwan.html>

ALTERNATIVE FOR COOKING GAS

There has been the use of alternative source of cooking gas in the meantime of delicate scarcity of fuels in. Locals of Kumroj VDC of Chitwan district, central region are turning to the production of methane gas from human waste. The area has more than 15,000 biogas plants constructed with attached toilet for around 17,050 households. Construction of one biogas furnace costs around NRs 50,000. The village has been declared a model VDC for its contribution toward minimizing climate change and conservation of forest as well as wildlife.

October 29

<http://www.myrepublica.com/society/story/30329/biogas-village-of-chitwan-has-no-worries-about-cooking-gas-shortage.html>

FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE

The decrease in temperature has affected the animals from disease of foot and mouth in Jumla, Karnali, north-west Nepal. The spread of the disease has affected more than 50 percent of the total animals in Raralihi, Kudari, Malikathata, Ghodemahadev, Tamti and Tatopani among others VDCs. Farmers were facing more difficulties in sowing barley and wheat as their oxen suffer from the foot and mouth disease. Agro vets and District Livestock Office were providing services and have asked the farmers to pay more attention to the cleanliness of livestock's foot and mouth.

October 30

<http://www.nepalnews.com/index.php/news/46416-more-animals-affected-from-disease-of-foot-and-mouth-in-jumla>

ANTIBIOTIC MISUSE

The health of the people has been adversely affected due to the haphazard distribution of antibiotic medicines by medical shops in Far-Western Region of Nepal. The use of antibiotics without prescription of doctors for is causing more problems than relief. The distribution of medicines by the medical shops which have not obtained licenses has increased the problem in the area.

October 31

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/haphazard-distribution-of-antibiotics-deteriorating-health-of-far-west-folks/>

CATTLE DISEASE

The spread of infectious peste des petits ruminants (PPR) disease has killed 3,000 cattle mostly goats, in Jajarkot district of mid-western part of Nepal. Over a dozen of VDCs in the north of the district were affected from the disease. In Paik, Talegau, Archhani, Pajaru, Majkot, Daha, Kortang, Garkhakot, Nayakbada, Rokayagaun, Ramidanda and other areas, the disease has increased rapidly. The farmers have urged the District Livestock Office to take steps to contain the disease.

November 01

<http://www.myrepublica.com/society/story/30446/3-000-cattle-dead-in-jajarkot.html>

NATIONAL PAK REOPENED

The Kaziranga National Park (KNP) authorities have taken all steps to reopen the heritage park to visitors in Assam, north eastern part of India. All necessary arrangements have been made which included the repair of roads and bridges and to add to the convenience of tourists. Another attraction for tourists this year will be the National Orchid and Biodiversity Park set up at Durgapur village. The flow of domestic and foreign tourists to the park has already started, which is a good sign for the tourism industry.

October 29

<http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=oct3015/state051>

MIGRATORY BIRDS IN KASHMIR

Migratory birds from Siberia, China, the Philippines and Eastern Europe had arrived to spend winter months in the Kashmir Valley of northern India to save from extreme cold of their summer homes. A riot of color and cackle has returned to the wetland reserves of Jammu and Kashmir with the first arrivals of thousands of migratory birds from far off lands this year. These birds have been keeping their annual meeting with the valley since last four hundred of years. Most wetland reserves and other water bodies continue to shrink because of the people's greed for land in Kashmir.

November 02

<http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/kashmir/migratory-birds-keep-tryst-with-kashmir/200504.html>

RIVER POLLUTION

More than 200 villages along the banks of Ramganga river in Kumaon region of Uttarakhand, northern India dispose of their domestic waste into the river. River pollution has increase due to agricultural pesticides such as endosulfan, dieldrin and DDT and open defecation at riverbanks. The rises in population and dumping of sewage in their tributaries have added to increasing pollution of the river.

November 02

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/uttarakhand/village-sewage-polluting-rivers/153483.html>

TEA INDUSTRY AT RISK

The tea industry of Guwahati of Arunachal Pradesh, north eastern India is passing through critical time. Wages constitute over 60 per cent of total cost of production. The price of tea has not been able to keep pace with the rise in wages. The Tea Board need to put E-Forms of every manufacturer in public domain so that growers can easily access them and thus a complete transparency could be maintained in implementing the price sharing formula.

November 01

<http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=nov0215/at051>

HIGHEST MOVEMENT OF TIGER

There have been the highest movements of tigers in NH6 and NH7 of central Indian landscape of India. The researchers assessed connectivity between 16 protected areas (PAs) in Central India, a global priority landscape for tiger conservation, using data on land use and land cover, human population density, and transportation infrastructure. The study found that highest flow of tigers was between Kanha-Pench, Pench-Satpura, Kanha-Navegaon, Kanha-Nagzira, Nagzira-Navegaon, and Nagzira-Pench. This landscape is the where tiger population is not viable on its own in the long run without immigration or emigration of adult tigers.

November 02

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/nagpur/NH6-NH7-cut-tiger-corridors-with-highest-movement-Study/articleshow/49622453.cms?>

RESCUED TIGER ADAPTED TO NEW ENVIRONMENT

The striped animal had sneaked in Nabi Bagh area of Bhopal, southern India and was rescued by trained rescue team of Van Vihar National Park. A tiger which was rescued has started to adapt to the new environment at the Panna Tiger Reserve (PTR). The tiger will be radio-collared for constant monitoring. With the arrival of this tiger, number of tigers in Panna has reached to 32 and there had been decrease of poaching since last four years.

November 01

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/flora-fauna/Rescued-tiger-from-Bhopal-adapting-to-new-environs-at-Panna-Tiger-Reserve/articleshow/49618069.cms>

China Himalaya

ENCROACHMENT CLEARED

The Chinese authorities' have renewed the destruction of Tibetan homes near Kokonor lake making over 900 Tibetans homeless.. A group of police arrived with bulldozers and began to destroy over 240 houses built by encroachers. The authorities accuse the Tibetans of polluting and crowding the area around the lake, according to the locals.

October 28

<https://www.phayul.com/news/article.aspx?id=36661&article=Demolition+drive+around+Kokonor+Lake+leave+s+over+900+Tibetans+homeless&t=1&c=1>

TIBET'S BIGGEST HYDROPOWER COMPLETED

The construction of the Zangmu hydropower facility in Tibet, which is the largest in the Tibet region of south west China has been completed. The project on the Yarlung Zangbo river, the upstream section of the trans-boundary Brahmaputra is located around 140 kilometres from the regional capital of Lhasa and cost USD 1.52 billion to build. With a combined capacity of 510 megawatts, the Zangmu facility will supply 2.5 billion kilowatt-hours of power to the grid annually to meet the needs of more than 600,000 residents based on Chinese per capita power use in 2014.

October 29

<http://www.voatibetanenglish.com/content/reu-report-china-complete-tibets-biggest-hydropower-plant/3003738.html>

Bhutan-Himalaya

WILDLIFE DEPRADATION

The untimely rainfall and bad weather has severely affected farmers in some parts of Bhutan meantime the wild animals have also destroying rice fields and orchards in Tsirang of southern Bhutan. Farmers spend most of their time in guarding their fields throughout the day. Monkeys attacking crops in their villages have damaged a bountiful paddy harvest in this year. Farmers were worried that the monkeys damaged both the paddy harvest and also their orange trees. Due to many similar incidents in the past, some farmers had given up farming even as they did not face any water shortage.

October 28

<http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=54085>

LOSS DUE TO WILDLIFE

At least 10 livestock are lost each month to tigers, snow leopard and the Himalayan Black Bear in the past four years, records with Wildlife Conservation Division (WCD) in Bhutan. Between 2010 and 2014, out of the 493 livestock killed, tigers preyed on 382 and snow leopards on 60. Five lives were lost each year to wildlife from January 2010 until September this year. The Himalayan Black Bear claimed 17 lives topping the list of the predators while wild boars killed another four. The rest were lost to elephants and common leopard. Department of Agriculture's records from July 2013 to June 2015 showed that wild animals ravaged 3261 hectares of fields across the country causing a crop loss of USD 116 of which USD 27 was paddy.

October 27

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/review-human-wildlife-conflict-strategy-say-foresters/>

SLUMP IN POTATO PRICES

There has been a drop in potato prices by almost seven times in Phuentsholing, southern part of Bhutan. The income has not been able to meet the plantation expenses and the farmers have to sell their potatoes at very low prices. Farmers were having problem even in receiving payment and the Food Corporation of Bhutan (FCB) has not provided accurate information about price expectations.

October 30

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/farmers-upset-with-poor-potato-prices/>

SEEKING SUPPORT TO INCREASE TOURIST

Hoteliers are seeking for urgent interventions from the government to boost tourism in Trashigang of eastern Bhutan. Of the 133,480 regional and international tourists that visited Bhutan last year, only 3.6 percent or 4,805 tourists visited the area this year. The on-going widening works of the Thimphu-Trashigang highway also left most tour operators from promoting the east as a tourist destination.

October 29

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/hoteliers-seek-support-to-boost-tourism-in-the-east/>

HAZELNUT FARMING

12 hectares of hazelnut have been planted by 20 farmers in their fallow land in Bjachho gewog's Bjachho village of Chukha district in western Bhutan with the objectives of improving the environment, financial earning and employment opportunities to rural folks. More than 70 percent of villagers have unused fallow lands and are interested taking up hazel nut farming. The nut trees are growing well but villagers are worried more about the pricing of the nuts after the trees start yielding.

October 30

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/hazelnut-arrives-in-chukha/>

Pakistan- Himalaya

EARTHQUAKE DAMAGE

As many as 155 schools were either fully or partially damaged by the powerful earthquake in Khyber Pakthunkhwa, northwestern of Pakistan. Similarly, 45 schools were affected in Dir Upper, 34 in Lakki Marwat, 15 in Bannu and eight in Swabi districts. The survey of the losses caused to educational institutes is in progress.

October 29

<http://paktribune.com/news/155-schools-in-Kp-damaged-by-earthquake-274893.html>