

Headlines Himalaya

October 06- October 13, 2015

No. 375

Editorial Team – Kiran Kunwar & Luna Thapa

For the 375th issue, we reviewed 30 news reports from 11 sources and selected 28 happenings in five countries. In Nepal, rats are causing an epidemic while migratory birds are found in Kashmir's wetland in northern India. In Tibet, China, a fossilized flower was discovered. Electricity supply increases in Bhutan and volunteer force is raised to seek public support in Peshawar of north western Pakistan.

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!

NEPAL

Rats causing epidemic
Bird species likely to extinct
Plantation in Kathmandu
Vehicular movement
School bus grounded
Viral Fever
Relief to poor families
Wildlife species in Himalayas
Vehicles enter in Nepal
Hunting fees increased in reserve
Tourism In Shuklaphanta Reserve
Forests Under Threat
Python Found
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Cleaning Bagmati
Food Shortage

INDIA

Tourism survey
Migratory birds in wetlands
Insufficient water supply
Bovine carcasses

CHINA

Ice core Study in Tibetan plateau
Fossilized flower discovered
Tibetan medicine nationwide
Transformation Of Tibetan Nomads

BHUTAN

Electricity Supply Increased
Victim Recovering
Plastic Waste For Road

PAKISTAN

Volunteer Force Raised

RATS CAUSING EPIDEMIC

Scrub Typhus (an acute feverish, infectious illness) has been growing as an epidemic in various parts of Nepal. According to the report submitted by (WHO) World Health Organization to Epidemiology and Disease Control Department, rat (*Rattus rattus*) is the main cause for the disease. The disease has been found in 75 out of 119 samples collected throughout the country. Of them, Scrub Typhus has been confirmed in 15 out of 31 samples from Dhangadi, 10 out of 31 samples from Dhading and 4 out of 6 samples from Dharan. The problem has started after the April 25 earthquake, due to direct human rat contact.

October 07

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2015-10-07/rats-causing-scrub-typhus-who-team.html>

BIRD SPECIES LIKELY TO BE EXTINCT

A total of one hundred and seventy species of birds found in Nepal are on the edge of extinction in Nepal. Ornithologists shared this information on the workshop organized by the Himalayan Nature, Geological Society of London and National Nature Conservation Fund in Sauraha, Chitwan district, southern Nepal. Sixty ornithologists from all over the world attended the five days workshop. The birds found in wetlands and grass lands were mainly extinct. Nepal is habitat to 875 species of birds with 629 species in Chitwan only.

October 06

<http://www.nepalnews.com/index.php/society-archive/46154-170-bird-species-in-nepal-on-verge-of-disappearance-ornithologists>

PLANTATION IN KATHMANDU

There has been plantation of 300 saplings of various species in the Kathmandu Metropolis, Central region of Nepal so as to develop Kathmandu as a green city. The plantation was carried out from Tripureshwar to - Thapathali, Bhadrakali and Singha Durbar so far and plantation still to go in front of the National City Hall, New Baneshwar and in Tribhuvan International Airport.

October 07

<http://www.nepalnews.com/index.php/news/46160-tree-plantation-drive-for-green-and-clean-kathmandu>

VEHICULAR MOVEMENT

The roads blocked by the earthquake has been opened and large vehicles including goods carrier trucks have begun operating along the Barhabise-Tatopani road section of western –central Nepal. The 26-kilometer track has been opened for passenger bus as well as goods carrier. The locals who had left the area were returned back and life was back to normal with trade activities.

October 07

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2015-10-07/vehicular-movement-resumes-on-barhabise-tatopani-road.html>

SCHOOL BUS GROUNDED

Of the total 2,000 school buses 50 percent have been grounded because of the fuel crisis in Kathmandu, central Nepal. Many schools have asked the guardians to make their own arrangements to sending their children to school. Since schools had already lost 26 days after the recent hit by earthquake so they are compelled to conduct classes even during the crisis.

October 07

<http://myrepublica.com/society/story/29377/50-percent-school-buses-grounded.html> viral fever outbreaks

VIRAL FEVER

People were suffering from the ill due to the outbreaks of viral fever at Puwa in Pulu VDC of Mugu district, mid-western Nepal. There is lack of medicines and health workers in the village so the sick people were deprived of medical care in the area. The patients were suffering from fever, headache, dizziness and nausea. The number of patients visiting the Bhojpur District Hospital has increased in the past couple of days.

October 09

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2015-10-09/viral-fever-outbreak-grips-mugu-village.html>

RELIEF TO POOR FAMILIES

A local committee has distributed relief materials to more than 600 families living in poverty line in Lahan, Siraha, eastern part of Nepal. Those affected families of indefinite general strike enforced by the United Democratic Madheshi Front were provided with food items by the Food Collection and Distribution Committee. The relief materials were provided to more than 850 households in Janakpur and 450 households in Mahottari.

October 09

<http://www.nepalnews.com/index.php/news/46223-extremely-poor-families-provided-with-relief-materials>

WILDLIFE SPECIES IN HIMALAYAS

According to World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Living Himalayas Initiative's latest regional species discovery report, more than 200 new wildlife species have been revealed in the Eastern Himalayas between 2009 and 2014 with 60 of them in Nepal. The identified species include 133 plants, 39 invertebrates, 26 fish, 10 amphibians, one reptile, one bird and one mammal. Some of the most striking discoveries include a vibrant blue dwarf 'walking' snakehead fish (*Channa andrao*) which can breathe atmospheric air and survive on land for up to four days, moving in a manner much clumsier than a smoothly slithering snake.

October 09

<http://myrepublica.com/society/story/29514/over-200-wildlife-species-discovered-in-eastern-himalayas.html>

VEHICLES ENTER IN NEPAL

As many as 36 tankers of petroleum products entered through Biratnagar-Jogbani border checkpoint in eastern part of Nepal even after the blockade at the Nepal-India border checkpoints across the Terai continued. According to Nepal Oil Corporation (NOC) regional office, Indian authorities have been supplying just 10 percent of Nepal's petroleum requirement so there had been entered of only three tankers of petrol and diesel and an LPG bullet entered Nepal through the Nepal-India border in Dhangadi. This has caused severe shortage of supplies of petroleum products across the country affecting the normal life.

October 09

<http://myrepublica.com/society/story/29523/36-fuel-trucks-enter-nepal-on-friday.html>

HUNTING FEES INCREASED IN RESERVE

Trophy hunting fee of Jharal (Himalayan Tahr) has been increased by NRs 300,000 in just a year's time in Dhorpatan Hunting reserve of western Nepal. Along with Jharal, the reserve has also increased fee for hunting Nayaur (Himalayan blue sheep). The fee has increased when the request for hunting license have been increasing year after year. Now, hunters have to pay NRs 926,000 and NRs 330,000 for Jharal and Nayaur hunting, respectively. The costs are around one third more than last year.

October 10

<http://myrepublica.com/society/story/29529/dhorpatan-hunting-reserve-hikes-hunting-fees.html>

TOURISM IN SHUKLAPHANTA RESERVE

Arrangements have been made to allow tourists to enter from two points; Majgaun Office and Piparaiya zone in Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve, Kanchanpur district of far-western Nepal. The reserve only allowed tourists from its Mijgaun Office but to promote tourism and visit tourism sites with ease, the two points were opened. The reserve has fixed the entrance fees as USD 0.48, USD 4.83 and USD 9.65 for Nepali visitors, SAARC country national and for third country tourists respectively.

October 08

<http://www.nepalnews.com/index.php/news/46186-shuklaphanta-reserve-allows-tourists-entry-from-two-points>

FORESTS UNDER THREAT

The ongoing blockade from India has increased the demand of fuels tremendously in Nepal leading to increased demand for fuelwood and felling of trees. With no cooking gas and kerosene, the demand for firewood has raised and forests are under pressure. Illegal logging has increased and the crisis in the petroleum product has also increased.

October 07

<http://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-34468821>

PYTHON FOUND

A python (*Python Morulus*) which is enlisted in IUCN red list of threatened species and only found in Terai region was found for the first time in Belbyas of Tanahu district, central Nepal. It was 2 meters long and 25 kilograms in weight. It is believed that the python was found in the area is mainly due to increase in temperature. The python was released in a dense forest in the area.

October 07

<http://kantipur.ekantipur.com/news/2015-10-07/20151007114138.html>

NEW TREKKING ROUTE

A new trekking route has started in Mustang district of northern Nepal, with the hope to attract more tourists. This is a 50 km alternative route from Muktinath to Pairathapla. The total investment for the trail construction was USD 5,792.59.

October 10

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/mustang-hopeful-with-more-tourist-arrival-with-new-trekking-route/>

CLEANING BAGMATI

Five metric tonnes of garbage from the Bagmati River in Kathmandu, central Nepal was removed through public participation. 200 people, including officials from Nepal Police and Armed Police Force joined the clean-up drive.

October 11

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2015-10-11/5-metric-tonnes-of-garbage-removed.html>

FOOD SHORTAGE

People are facing shortage of food in Chepang villagers of Chitwan district, central Nepal. The villagers were dependent on wild fruits since August due to the shortage of foodstuffs. Similar shortage is also being faced by the Dolpa villagers (Dolpa district, western Nepal). Chief of Nepal Food Corporation said that the limited stock and fuel crisis is making the distribution difficult.

October 11

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2015-10-11/food-crisis-grips-chepang-villages.html>

India-Himalaya

MIGRATORY BIRDS IN WETLANDS

A research scholar from the Centre for Mountain Wildlife Sciences of Sher-e-Kashmir University for Agricultural Sciences and Technology has spotted the newer species of migratory birds in Kashmir's wetlands, northern India where they bred during their stay. 85 species that were spotted at Chatlam and Manibug wetlands included 20 species of migratory waterfowl.

October 09

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/jammu-kashmir/community/migratory-birds-flock-to-kashmir-s-wetlands/143983.html>

INSUFFICIENT WATER SUPPLY

The Residents of several villages under Sarkaghat tehsil have opposed the privatization of the Kohan-Kot-Karnohal that lift drinking water scheme in Mandi of Himanchal Pradesh, northern India.. The water supply was regular and sufficient before the water schemes but now the water supply is only twice a week or sometimes once a week.

October 09

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/himachal/community/villagers-flay-privatisation-of-water-scheme/143950.html>

BOVINE CARCASSES

The numbers of bovine carcasses were found dead in Chenani town of Udampur district in Jammu, north western India. This is likely to be a case of poison according to the postmortem report. Hindu protesters blocked the 300 kilometer-long Jammu Srinagar highway, thinking it was caused by Muslim. Security force presence has been increased in areas having a mix of Hindu and Muslim population in the city.

October 09

<http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/jammu/-bovine-carcasses-in-udhampur-not-slaughter/198451.html>

TOURISM SURVEY

The tourist profile and carrying capacity of major destination were studied by Himanchal tourism in Himanchal Pradesh, north western part of India so as to get an idea about the statistics and preferences of its visitors. The study will provide details of the tourist profile including age group, duration of stay and preferred destination, as to get an exact idea about the changing travel preferences of tourists. The highest arrivals were from Gujarat, Maharashtra and West Bengal and Rajasthan.

October 10

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/himachal/state-plans-survey-to-boost-tourism/143955.html>

China Himalaya

ICE CORE STUDY IN TIBETAN PLATEAU

A major multinational scientific expedition is being carried out on China's Southwest Qinghai-Tibet Plateau with a mission to collect ice cores in the remote, primitive land, which could allow an understanding of climate change. After a hard eight-day journey, the expedition team has reached a point 6,200 meters above sea level, using snowmobiles, and sometimes manual labor. Scientists will further penetrate down into the drilling zones, into the heart of the plateau, to recover the deep hidden ice cores.

October 08

http://www.tew.org/archived/2015/10082015_4.htm

FOSSILIZED FLOWER DISCOVERED

Scientists found the flower at an altitude of 4,600 metres - thousands of metres above its normal living range which was seventeen million years old in Tibet, southwestern China. The collision between the Indian and Eurasian tectonic plates causes the plateau to rise a little every year, but environmental effects such as wind and rain erode some of this growth. It was believe the fossilized flower, of a Berberis plant in the Hol Xil Basin, gives a unique insight into the elevation of the regional landscape at the time. The plant fossil provides a good angle to look at the issue, but the method has its limits - such as possible natural transportation of the plant before burial.

October 08

http://www.tew.org/archived/2015/10082015_3.htm

TIBETAN MEDICINE NATIONWIDE

According to the local health department, Tibetan pharmaceutical firms were set to compete in the wider-Chinese market with the capacity to produce Tibetan medicine in Tibet of southwestern China. The annual industrial output of Tibetan medicine now 126 million U.S. dollars and 18 Tibetan firms are now Good Manufacturing Practice certified the national standard. Tibetan medicine is at least 2,300 years old and has been influenced by traditional Chinese, Indian and Arab medicine and is practiced in Tibet and the Himalayan region. Tibetan medicine uses herbs, minerals and sometimes insects and animals.

October 08

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-10/08/c_134692707.htm

TRANSFORMATION OF TIBETAN NOMANDS

Tibetan nomads have now live in comfortable houses in Gyagan village, Damxung county, northern china. Earlier they migrated from one place to another where they get water, living in tents with poor living condition. The Government implemented settlement project helped them to build the houses which has changed their lifestyle as well as increased their source of income. They learn skills, engage in agriculture, and receive normal medical treatment and children's education.

October 09

http://eng.tibet.cn/2012sy/xw/201510/t20151009_3953477.html

Bhutan-Himalaya

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY INCREASED

The construction of 118MW Nikachhu and 600MW Kholongchhu hydropower projects was likely to increase the supply of electricity in Bhutan. The pre-monsoon rain has resulted in a 67 percent increase in generation in April and about 33 percent in May this year, compared to last year. However, in the peak months of July, August and September, the generation this year decreased slightly. In a span of nine months, the country generated 5,940MU of electricity against 5,661MU last year and 5,861MU in 2013, for the same period.

October 10

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/electricity-import-to-increase/>

VICTIM RECOVERING

The farmer mauled by a bear while collecting wild nut from the community forest near his house in Nganglang dungkhag is recovering in stable condition at the basic health unit. It is common to see wild animals attacking houses looking for food because the village is located about 2kilometers from Royal Manas National Park.

October 08

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/bear-maul-victim-recovering/>

PLASTIC WASTE FOR ROAD

A road is being built out of plastic waste so as to maintain environmental friendly roads in Thimpu, central Bhutan. 515 kilograms of plastic waste was collected from the landfill and mixed with aggregate and bitumen. Mixing churned plastic with asphalt and aggregate forms a compound called polymerized bitumen which is used to blacktop roads.

October 7

<http://www.bhutannewsnetwork.com/2015/10/plastic-road-in-thimphu/>

Pakistan- Himalaya

VOLUNTEER FORCE RAISED

The district administration has formed a 600-member volunteer force to seek public support in case of any disaster in Peshawar in north-western Pakistan. The participants were briefed on multi-media about the function of the volunteer force and told that that public support was must in case of disaster, mega sports event, cleanliness drive, plantation campaign, anti-polio vaccination and creation of awareness about traffic issues. The volunteers were educated about the process as to how they could take part in an emergency situation.

October 09

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1211883/volunteer-force-raised-in-peshawar>