

Headlines Himalaya

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No. 337

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For the 337th issue, we reviewed 22 news reports from 11 sources and selected 12 happenings in five countries. The risk and lack of preparedness for a big quake has again been highlighted in Kathmandu while in India avian flue is raising concern in Uttarakhand. Similarly, in Tibet, China, 13 more cultural heritages are enlisted in National Intangible Cultural Heritage list by UNESCO and economic condition of people is improving through community forests in Bumthang, Bhutan. And, the only sewage treatment plant of Peshawar remains misused in 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!

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Nepal-Himalaya

KATHMANDU UNPREPARED FOR A BIG QUAKE

With no open space, earthquake proof structure, earthquake awareness and failure to learn from previous disaster, Kathmandu is still under-prepared for earthquakes. According to the National Society for Earthquake Technology (NSET), there hasn't been much progress to protect people and the existing infrastructure from the disaster. Various studies have shown that if a tremor like that of 1934 strikes Kathmandu Valley, then over 90,000 people would die and 80 per cent of the building structures would collapse.

January 13

<http://www.ekantipur.com/2015/01/13/development/kathmandu-under-prepared-for-earthquake/400274.html>

WILDLIFE WOES

Rabid Jackals have created havoc among the locals in Maidi VDC, Dhading district in central Nepal by attacking human as well as the livestock. As many as 14 human and scores of livestock have been injured from the attack of jackals and among them nine are at serious condition. In another case, onset of snowfall in the upper belt of Bajura district, far western Nepal has increased illegal hunting and smuggling of rare wild animals massively as the animals migrate down due to the extreme environmental condition.

January 13, 14

<http://www.ekantipur.com/2015/01/12/national/rabid-jackals-terrorise-dhading-locals/400234.html>

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/fullNews.php?headline=Poaching%E2%80%9A+smuggling+of+rare+animals+up+in+Bajura+district+of+late&NewsID=441041>

DIFFICULTIES IN SNOW LEOPARD STUDY

Study of snow leopard has become increasingly difficult for researchers in Taplejung, northeastern Nepal as only one snow leopard has been attached with radio collar in the past one and half year. Due to the failure of various efforts to fit collar on this endangered animal, researchers have been compelled to rely on past data. The population of snow leopards is estimated to be 300 to 500 in Nepal.

January 14

<http://www.ekantipur.com/2015/01/14/national/snow-leopard-study-becoming-difficult-experts/400329.html>

TOURISM GROWTH IN CHITWAN

Tourism in the Chitwan National Park region, western Nepal is seeing an unprecedented growth with the growth of wildlife nearby buffer zone and community forests. To make this happen, locals and the park administration have worked days and nights to protect the animals and their habitat and monitoring the sensitive zones 24 hours a day. However, in lack of adequate weaponry and other equipment, the staffs guarding the park are at serious risk.

January 14

http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=90360#sthash.eZbF3wg5.dpuf

WATER SHORTAGE IN RAMECHHAP

Water shortage in Pakarbas VDC of Ramechhap district in central Nepal has hit life of about 29 households of the area. Also, 19 other VDCs of the district are at a high risk of water crisis due to which they are compelled to spend the whole night near a tap waiting to fill a can of drinking water. To combat this crisis, people from more than a dozen VDCs of the district have shifted to areas near the river.

January 15

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/fullNews.php?headline=Acute+water+shortage+hits+locals+hard+&NewsID=441165>

FOOD SHORTAGE IN JAJARKOT

People in remote part of Jajarkot, mid western Nepal are suffering from shortage of food as Nepal Food Corporation (NFC) has not been able to transport subsidized rice to those areas for the past eight months. The transportation of rice in the depots had been delayed as NFC could not entertain the tender applications filed by transport entrepreneurs. According to NFC, they had supplied 550 quintals of rice in September but nothing has reached the depots since then.

January 15

<http://www.ekantipur.com/2015/01/15/national/famine-looms-large-in-jajarkot/400374.html>

DECLINE IN MIGRATORY BIRDS

A team of ornithologists and conservationists, who have been studying the pattern of birds for the past one week in Kaski district western Nepal, reported that the human activities such as deforestation and encroachment, has reduced the numbers of migratory birds in the district. As per the research, migratory birds have decreased by 15 per cent due to the encroachment of wetlands, fishing, human movement and adventure sports activities like paragliding.

January 15

[http://www.ekantipur.com/2015/01/15/national/number of water birds declining/400370.html](http://www.ekantipur.com/2015/01/15/national/number%20of%20water%20birds%20declining/400370.html)

India-Himalaya

UTTARAKHAND UNDER THREAT OF AVIAN FLU

Uttarakhand in northern India is under threat of avian influenza as thousands of birds arrive to this part of the country from European and Siberia-Russian region during winter season. A joint team of Animal Husbandry, Forest and Rajaji National Park avian experts has inspected the flu prone areas by testing samples and fortunately, no prima facie symptoms of swine flu have been diagnosed. The team will also inspect poultry farms of the area as a precautionary measure.

January 14

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/uttarakhand/state-under-threat-of-avian-flu/29677.html>

China Himalaya

CULTURAL HERITAGE ENLISTED BY UNESCO

Tibet in Southwestern China is considered to be rich in cultural heritages as it has centuries-old history of arts and culture. According to the recent announcement made by the state council, 13 items have been successfully enlisted in the list of National Intangible Culture by UNESCO. Till now, 89 national intangible cultural heritage items and 68 national masters have been listed from Tibet.

January 13

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2015-01/13/c_133916615.htm

MILESTONE IN BARLEY DIVERSITY

Genome of Tibetan highland barley has been published by the scientists from a genomic organization in south China's Shenzhen City, Xinhua in the Proceedings of National Academy of Sciences (PNAS). According to BGI Tech Solutions about 3.89 billion of the estimated totals of 4.5 billion base pairs of chemicals were assembled to make up the DNA of the barley genome. The barley makes up 70 per cent of all cereal crops in southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region.

January 14

http://eng.tibet.cn/2012sy/xw/201501/t20150114_2212855.html

Bhutan-Himalaya

COMMUNITY FORESTS IMPROVE LOCAL ECONOMY

Economic condition of people of Uruk village in Bumthang district, central Bhutan has improved as sale of surplus timber has started from the community forest in Namdrupcholing. With this earned money, the community forest management group provided small agricultural loans to the local people with less interest to start off new business. Till date, the community forest has sold timber worth Nu 550,000 while it has also earned Nu 100,000 by collecting interests from the loan provided.

January 13

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/money-does-grow-on-trees/#.VLyN1NKUfSk>

Pakistan- Himalaya

MISUSE OF SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT

The only sewage treatment plant of Peshawar in northern Pakistan has not come into operation even after 16 years of its establishment. The plant consists of number of sprawling ponds meant for treatment of sewage before falling into Bara River, a tributary of Kabul River. But those ponds are being used as a dumping ground and none of the concerned authorities are ready to take the responsibility for well utilization of this misused sewage treatment plant.

January 18

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1157779/sewage-treatment-plant-not-functional-for-16-years>