

# Headlines Himalaya

April 20 – April 26

No 401

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For the 401th issue of Headlines Himalaya, we reviewed 38 news from 14 sources and selected 35 happenings from five countries. In Nepal Himalaya, drought hits several districts creating acute water shortage for human and wild life. In India, 25 young monitor lizards (*Varamus bengalensis*) were rescued and rehabilitated. In China, government has allocated \$772 million for rural construction. In Bhutan, Government is on the way to prepare new strategy which addresses the human- wildlife conflict in holistic approach. In Pakistan, government acquires additional land for the construction of dam.

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## NEPAL

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*Houses under Threat of Landslides*  
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## Nepal-Himalaya

### LABS TO TEST PESTICIDE RESIDUE

The government of Nepal will begin setting up laboratories to test pesticide residue in fruits and vegetables in five more cities across the country within two months. Two years ago, Ministry of Agriculture Development announced plans to set up such laboratories in different parts of the country to address growing concern over excess use of pesticides. The lab uses Bioassay for Pesticide Residue (RBPR) technology to test pesticide residue.

April 17

<http://www.myrepublica.com/economy/story/40762/labs-to-test-pesticide-residue-to-be-set-up-in-five-more-cities.html#sthash.UuB70v9Z.dpuf>

### HOUSES UNDER THREAT OF LANDSLIDES

Around 27 houses in the Nuwakot VDC of Jumla district of Mid-western region are prone to future monsoon induced landslides. Rugged topography and haphazard excavation of building materials have accelerated the rate of landslide occurrence. Villagers have partially shifted to another area fearing that landslide is imminent this monsoon.

April 18

<http://www.myrepublica.com/society/story/40758/landslide-threatens-lives-and-livelihoods.html#sthash.GXimUNMH.dpuf>

### WILDLIFE WEEK CELEBRATION COMPLETED

Department of National Park and Wildlife (DNPWC) in collaboration with other partners organized 21<sup>st</sup> Wildlife Week Celebrations between April 13 and April 19 to raise awareness on wildlife conservation in different National Parks across Nepal. Awareness on wildlife conservation via different media, art and poetry competition among students were some of the highlights of the program.

April 19

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/wildlife-week-concludes/>

### INDIGENOUS PADDY SEEDS DISAPPEAR

Indigenous paddy with superior quality has been disappearing in Myagdi district, Western Nepal. More than 12 varieties have disappeared so far, with increased use of hybrid paddy by the local farmers. Shortage of fodder for domestic animals, arrival of new diseases and epidemics are some of the problems faced by local farmers when hybrid paddy varieties are cultivated.

April 19

<http://www.myrepublica.com/society/story/40785/indigenous-paddies-in-myagdi-losing-ground.html#sthash.uhoSLpQL.dpuf>

### HAILSTONE IN TAPLEJUNG

The hailstone of April 18 has destroyed winter crops and fruits at dozens of Village Development Committee in Taplejung district, Eastern Nepal. It destroyed crops like maize, mustard and wheat, vegetables including cucumber and pumpkins, and fruits like oranges.

April 19

<http://www.myrepublica.com/society/story/40787/hailstone-destroys-winter-crops-in-taplejung.html#sthash.qPk5u6a5.dpuf>

#### **WATER CRISIS IN TERAJ**

More than a dozen of villages in northern Mohatari district, central Terai region of eastern Nepal, are facing acute water shortages due to drying up of water sources. Exploitation of adjoining Chure hills, uncontrolled deforestation and long drought are the major causes for water sources drying up. Likewise, water sources of many areas in the eastern region of Nepal have dried up creating a severe water crisis .Biratnagar, the city in eastern Nepal is struggling to manage water for the residents.

April 20, 23

<http://www.myrepublica.com/society/story/40822/northern-mahottari-villages-reel-under-water-crunch.html#sthash.UgNeiHrl.dpuf>

<http://www.myrepublica.com/society/story/41012/water-crisis-hits-eastern-region.html>

#### **HANDMADE PAPER FACTORIES RESUME PRODUCTION AFTER 10 YEARS**

Handmade paper factories in the Bajhang district of the far-western region have been re-registered with the authorities to resume production. These factories had to halt their production due to high production costs, shortage of raw materials, lack of manpower and the Maoist insurgency. Nepali handmade paper 'Lokta' is used for official and ceremonial purposes and is one of the major exportable goods of the country.

April 20

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-04-20/handmade-paper-factories-return-after-10-year-break.html>

#### **HEAT WAVE IN WESTERN TERAJ AFFECTS NORMAL LIFE**

Normal life has been greatly affected due to the increased temperature in Banke, Kailali and Kanchanpur district of western Nepal. The temperature 42.2<sup>o</sup> Celsius recorded on April 18 was highest in comparison to records of the last two years .Water taps and wells have dried up in two adjoining district also.

April 21

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-04-21/heat-wave-affects-western-tarai-districts.html>

#### **WATER SOURCES DRY UP IN CHITWAN NATIONAL PARK**

The water sources in the Chitwan National Park (CNP), central Nepal are drying up due to long dry spell. This alarming condition has threatened the animal and aquatic life of CNP. If similar condition prevail eight lakes out of 56 may disappear very soon.

April 21

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-04-21/drought-affects-wildlife-in-chitwan.html>

#### **TOURISM IN LANGTANG PICKS UP**

Tourists are gradually heading back to Langtang region of Rasuwa district, Central Nepal which was completely devastated by Gorkha earthquake. Locals are working extra shifts to bring tourist back. Consumer forum and district development committee have improved trekking trails in the region. Before the earthquake, Langtang received around 15,000 tourists annually.

April 21

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-04-20/langtang-tourism-rebounds-gradually.html>

#### **LIGHTNING STRIKE AT TWO PLACES IN KHOTANG**

A lightning struck Prithvi Higher Secondary School playground, Khotang, Eastern Nepal which killed one and injured 15 other audience members watching Baksila Gold Cup Football Tournament. The match was being played while it was raining slightly on the 5th day of the tournament. Similarly, another lightening incident occurred at Mahure, Nunthala VDC, killing a 73 year old woman.

23 April

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/lightning-kills-one-injures-15-football-audience-khotang/>

#### WILDFIRE RAGES THROUGH RAMECHHAP

A wildfire in Manthali Municipality, Ramechhap, Central Nepal, destroyed four houses completely. The wildfire also spread to different community forests destroying 400 hectares of forests in Sahayatri Jadibuti and four hectares forest in Budhikhoriya Community Forest. Police personnel and local people have been trying to bring the fire under control as it spreads to forests in Gunshi and Preety VDCs of the district.

April 24

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/four-houses-reduced-ashes/>

#### LONG DROUGHT WORRIES FARMER

Long hot and dry spell condition have left farmers worried in Banke district, western Terai of Nepal, as underground sources of water has started to dry up. Farmers are facing a gloomy prospect of losing their investment in vegetable farming, as only 30 percent of farmlands have access to irrigation.

April 24

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-04-24/long-hot-spell-leaves-farmers-high-and-dry.html>

#### WATER SHORTAGE IN EARTHQUAKE STRUCK DISTRICTS

Earthquake survivors are experiencing difficulties in collecting drinking water in the worst-hit districts of central Nepal. Water crisis has forced Kavre farmers to sell their cattle to buy water supplied by tankers. In Kavre, around 600 water supply schemes were damaged by the earthquake, whereas 35 percent sources of water dried up completely in Rasuwa district.

April 24

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-04-24/water-shortage-adds-to-hardship-of-quake-survivors.html>

#### RHINO POACHERS ARRESTED

Six persons have been arrested in connection to the smuggling of Rhino horns in Ghodaghodi Municipality of Kailali district, far-western Nepal. One smuggler was arrested with the 19-inch long horn which had the perimeter of 13 inches. Other five suspects have been identified which will be charged according to the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1973.

April 24

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/six-arrested-rhino-horn-kailali/>

## India-Himalaya

#### SACRED RIVER TURNS TO DUMPING SITE

Local residents of Udampur district are continuing to throw garbage in a sacred river, Devika, which is dying a slow death due to pollution. However, the District Magistrate had already issued a ban against throwing waste in the river to keep ancient Devika river pollution free. All such orders being issued by administration time to time are not being implemented on the ground by any related agencies.

April 18

<http://epaper.earlytimes.in/index.aspx?page=5>

#### RESCUE OF MONITOR LIZARDS

Monitor lizards (*Varamus bengalensis*) 25 in number, were rescued at Udmari village in Darrang district and subsequently released in a biodiversity park at Kalaigaon in Udguri district of Assam. An awareness field workshop was arranged on the behavior of snakes, owls and monitor lizards involving hundreds of school teachers and students between April 4 and April 18.

April 19

<http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=apr2016/state050>

#### MIRIK REELING UNDER ACUTE WATER SHORTAGE

Mirik, a village of Darjeeling, is going through acute water shortage due to lack of rainfall for a long time. The natural sources have dried up and there is no water supply system in the village. With the monsoon season still far away, the remaining water sources are also at risk of drying up soon, further worsening the crisis.

April 19

<http://darjeelingtimes.com/mirik%E2%80%AC-reeling-under-acute-water-shortage/>

#### MASSIVE PLANTATION DRIVE CONDUCTED AT MIKONG

In Mirem-Mikong area, adjacent to Gutin Reserve Forest in East Siang district, Arunachal, an NGO launched a massive plantation drive with active participation of the territorial forest staffs and local villagers. The organizers along with the forester staffs and local villagers planted 100 saplings of various kinds. The NGO, Kamji Karbat Rumne Group (KCRG), also conducted an awareness program and made the villagers aware about the importance of plant and animals for ecological balance.

April 16

<http://www.arunachaltimes.in/massive-plantation-drive-conducted-at-mikong/>

#### 3000 HECTARES ENCROACHED LAND RETRIEVED

The forest department reclaimed 3000 hectares of forest land during an anti-encroachment drive in Bhadeah division of Doda district, Jammu. However, the operation faced a stiff resistance from the invaders. The forest office has now set up a demarcation committee for cracking down on the heavyweight encroachers.

April 20

<http://epaper.earlytimes.in/index.aspx?page=8>

#### BOVINE SMUGGLING ON RISE

The bovine smuggling is increasing day by day from Jammu to other parts of state. Hundreds of bovine animals are being taken from different parts of Jammu to Kashmir valley daily as there is a big nexus between the officials and the smugglers. This month alone 29 animals were rescued by the police at different passes of Samba district.

April 20

<http://epaper.earlytimes.in/>

#### CAMERA TRAPPING REVEALS EXCITING RESULTS

The annual camera trapping in Pakke Tiger Reserve, Seijosa in Arunachal has revealed some positive developments. Different species of cat family were observed in the camera including *Panthera tigris*, *Panthera pardus* and *Gallus gallus* (Red jungle fowl). The forest department conducted the camera trapping between Nov 25, 2015 and April 10, 2016. They are also planning to release a document on camera trapping in this area by the end of April.

April 20

<http://www.arunachaltimes.in/encouraging-camera-trapping-results-from-pakke-tiger-reserve/>

#### HAILSTORM CAUSE EXTENSIVE DAMAGES IN NAGALAND

Heavy storm accompanied by hail and rain has caused extensive damages to crops and houses, rendering hundreds of people homeless in Zunheboto district of Nagaland. The hailstorm lashed villages under Suruhoto Sub-division of the district and the adjoining areas, damaging around 500 houses and destroying crops and vegetation.

April 20

[www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=apr2116/oth054](http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=apr2116/oth054)

#### THOUSANDS HIT BY FLOOD IN ASSAM

Incessant rains and resultant floods from past few days have affected Sonari, Jorhat, Dibrugarh, Tinsukhia and other parts of upper Assam district. The first wave of floods inundated about 40 villages, affecting over 12,000 people in the district. The water resource department officials and the district disaster management cell are yet to start any surveys in the flood hit areas.

April 23

<http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=apr2416/at052>

#### LANDSLIDES KILLS 16 PEOPLE IN ARUNACHAL

A massive landslide, on April 22, killed 16 people at Famla village in Tawang district. A fresh landslide triggered by torrential rain the next day, killed another 2 people and injured four in the same district. Heavy rains in the past couple of days triggered massive landslides and flood-like situation in almost all the districts of the Himalayan State bordering China.

April 23

<http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=apr2416/oth054>

<http://thenorthlines.com/readMore.aspx?nid=74877>

<http://www.arunachaltimes.in/two-killed-in-lumla-landslide-four-injured/>

#### IRRESPONSIBLE CIVIC BODY DUMPS WASTE IN RIVER

Municipal Committee Aishmuqam in Anantnag district of south Kashmir continues to dump solid waste in a rivulet known as *Aishmuqam Graad*. This rivulet merges with river Lidder, which is main source of drinking water to half of Anantnag district. People fear outbreak of water borne diseases and harm to trout fish habitat for which Lidder is famous.

April 23

<http://epaper.earlytimes.in/epaperadmin/photos/large/455923454201658795.jpg>

#### AGRICULTURAL LAND TURNS INTO RESIDENTIAL AREA IN JK

The conversion of agricultural lands in residential area is going unabated across Jammu and Kashmir. As per recent figures, the land has shrunk from 0.14 Ha per person in 1981 to 0.08 in 2001 and further to 0.06 in 2012 and the process is still going on. The High court has given a number of orders to all Deputy Commissioners to implement policies to stop conversion of food producing land into concrete jungle.

April 23

<http://epaper.earlytimes.in/epaperadmin/photos/large/303722042016799.jpg>

#### HIMACHAL RECEIVES RAIN AND SNOW

When many states in India are reeling under a severe heat wave, some high-altitude areas of Himachal Pradesh are witnessing extreme cold. Most of the hill destinations in Himachal Pradesh on April 23 received moderate rainfall, while Keylong in Lahaul-Spiti district saw snow, bringing down the minimum temperature to minus 3.1 degrees Celsius.

April 24

[http://zeenews.india.com/news/himachal-pradesh/rain-snow-in-himachal-as-heat-wave-hits-other-states\\_1879087.html](http://zeenews.india.com/news/himachal-pradesh/rain-snow-in-himachal-as-heat-wave-hits-other-states_1879087.html)

## China Himalaya

#### TIBET ALLOCATES \$772 MILLION FOR RURAL CONSTRUCTION

Southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region has spent more than USD 772 million, over the past six years, on improving the region's rural areas. The project that began with 500 villages in 2010 has now been expanded to cover 4,900 villages, almost the entire rural area of the region, according to the region's office for the farmer and herders housing project.

April 20

<http://eng.tibet.cn/economy/projects/146113484225.shtml>

## Bhutan-Himalaya

### BHUTAN TO PREPARE NEW STRATEGY ON HUMAN WILDLIFE CONFLICT

The agriculture ministry of Bhutan has begun preparing a long-term holistic approach to manage human wildlife conflict in the country. The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Bhutan trained agriculture, livestock and wildlife officials on an emerging concept, Human Wildlife Safe System Approach. The previous human wildlife strategy developed in 2008 expired in 2013.

April 18

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/rethinking-human-wildlife-conflict/>

### FOREST FIRE POSE THREAT TO BHUTAN'S PRISTINE FOREST COVER

The forest department recently revealed that more than 8,000 Ha of forest had been burnt in forest fires within last two months of this year. An estimate of department of forest and park service tells that every year more than 4,000 Ha of forest gets engulfed by fire. Recently, one of the biggest fires ever recorded, burned down hundreds of hectares of forest cover in Jigme Singye Wangchuk National Park.

April 20

[http://www.shanghaidaily.com/article/article\\_xinhua.aspx?id=327454](http://www.shanghaidaily.com/article/article_xinhua.aspx?id=327454)

### HAILSTORM DAMAGES POTATO CROPS IN WANGDUE

A hailstorm on the night of April 20 has severely damaged potato crops in at least 10 households in Tomla village of Dangchu gewog, Wangdue. This was the third hailstorm to hit Wangdue, particularly those living in the gewogs of Kashi and Dangchu. The damages were too severe and almost 95% of the affected fields were affected.

April 22

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/hailstorm-damages-potato-crops-in-dangchu/>

## Pakistan- Himalaya

### GOVERNMENT ACQUIRES ADDITIONAL LAND FOR DAM CONSTRUCTION

Around 3,186.89 Ha of additional land has been acquired at the cost of \$450 million for construction of the Diamer-Bhasha Dam. The land acquired for the dam includes a large part of Chilas city, which will be submerged when the dam starts storing water after completion of construction. The dam will produce 4500 MW of electricity, store 10.5 Km<sup>3</sup> water for irrigation and drinking and control flood damage downstream upon completion.

April 21

<http://pamirtimes.net/2016/04/21/45-billion-rupees-paid-to-diamer-bhasha-dam-land-owners-63k-kanal-land-acquired-in-6-months/>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diamer-Bhasha\\_Dam](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diamer-Bhasha_Dam)

### RESIDENTS UNSATISFIED WITH THE FLOOD MITIGATION ACTIVITIES

The residents of flood-hit Reshun village in Upper Chitral, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are unsatisfied with the works going on to mitigate flood in a local stream. Villagers complain that the contractor is not properly clearing the big boulders brought by the recent flood, which might again divert water flow to the area in future. A series of glacial lakes outburst floods (GLOF) played havoc with the village in July and August, last year, rendering over 150 families homeless.

April 23

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1253916/chitral-villagers-not-happy-with-streams-dredging>