

Headlines Himalaya

Sep 19– Sep25

No. 423

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For the 423rd issue of Headlines Himalaya, we reviewed 26 news from 10 sources and selected 23 happenings from five countries. In Nepal, the new biodiversity garden established through collaboration of Nepal's Botanical Garden and UK's Royal Botanical Garden Edinburgh was officially inaugurated on 22nd September. Owing to its extensive coverage of environmental related issues, WWF gave a Conservation Media Award, 2016 to Nepal Republic Media on the occasion of 10th Conservation Day. In India, World famous Dal Lake of the Kashmir valley is being cleaned by Lakes and Waterways Development Authority (LAWDA) to save it from *Azolla* and other weeds. The flight survey technology used to observe the animal species estimated around 150,000 Tibetan antelope (*Pantholops hodgsonii*) at the base of the Sewu Snow Mountain, Tibet. In central Bhutan, Gangtey-Phobji is listed in Ramsar list as third Ramsar site in the country, and Nendyar River in north-western Pakistan is turning into a landfill site.

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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DRAMATIC INCREASE IN VEGETABLE PRICES

The devotees adopting to be vegetarian with the starting of Sorah Shradha sacred season has led to dramatic increase in the prices of vegetables in the Kathmandu Valley, central Nepal. The bitter gourd (*Momordica charantia*) which once used to sell at the cost of only NRs 45 per kg has rocketed to NRs 115 per kg in the following week. However, the supply of vegetables failed to go hand in hand with demand, the supply has dropped to 650 tonnes of vegetables daily from 750 tonnes till a week ago in Kalamati which is the largest vegetable market in the town due to frequent changes in the weather patterns.

Sep 20

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-09-20/veggie-prices-soar-on-rising-demand-dropping-supplies.html>

ANOTHER LEOPARD ATTACK

A local in Syangja district, western Nepal was attacked by Leopard (*Panthera pardus*) while he was collecting fodder in his own kitchen garden. The victim suffered various claw marks over his body including the head and hands.

Sep 20

<http://www.myrepublica.com/news/5994>

INAUGURATION OF NEW BIODIVERSITY GARDEN

The New biodiversity garden, established through collaboration of Nepal's Botanical Garden and UK's Royal Botanical Garden Edinburgh was officially inaugurated on 22nd September. The inauguration timing coincided with celebrations of the bicentenary relationship between the UK and Nepal. This garden is built inside Godavari's National Botanical Garden and is believed to educate over 100,000 students each year regarding the importance of plant biodiversity, climate change and conservation.

Sep 22

<http://www.myrepublica.com/news/6160>

DFO KNOCK DOWN BUILDING OF RADIO DHADING FOR ENCROACHMENT

The District Forest Office (DFO) of the Dhading, central Nepal along with number of police personnel and two excavators knocked down the building of Radio Dhading 106 MHz on Friday morning. All the equipment and other properties worth NRs 10 million were destroyed during the knock down. It was reported that DFO had already warned the station to leave the forest land they have encroached constructing own building.

Sep 23

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/dfo-demolishes-radio-dhading-building-encroachment/>

NEPAL REPUBLIC MEDIA RECEIVED WWF CONSERVATION MEDIA AWARD

Owing to its extensive coverage of environmental related issues in its prints and online publication, World Wildlife Fund (WWF) gave a Conservation Media Award, 2016 to Nepal Republic Media on the occasion of 10th Conservation Day. Far Western Media Development was also awarded for its valuable work for the preservation and promotion of natural environment whereas, Shree Jung Brigade of Nepal Army and Chetana Women Community Forest received the Abraham Conservation Award.

Sep 23

<http://www.myrepublica.com/news/6187>

<http://www.myrepublica.com/news/6187>

THREE ARRESTED FOR SLAUGHTERING COW

Police detained three people for involving in slaughtering of cow for its flesh in Kanchapur district of Far-western Nepal. The criminals were arrested red-handed and they were handed over to the area police office at Tribhuvanbasti for further investigation. According to the law of Nepal, it is illegal to slaughter cow and specifies 12 years of imprisonment if one is caught involving in this act.

Sep 24

<http://www.myrepublica.com/news/6263>

LEOPARD RESCUED ALIVE FROM A HOUSE

A joint team from Nepal Police and District Forest Office has rescued a leopard that sneaked into one of local's house at Lubhu in Lalitpur district, central Nepal. The rescued wild cat was then handed to the Central Jawalakhel Zoo.

Sep 24

<http://www.myrepublica.com/news/6223>

DRAINING OF WATER FROM IMJA LAKE

A team from the department of Hydrology and Meteorology has already started the project of draining water from Imja Lake, one of fastest growing glacial lakes in the Himalayas, in Solukhumbu district of the western region of Nepal. The project funded by United Nations Development programme and the Global environment Facility is designed to reduce the community based flood and glacial outburst risk in the Solukhumbu and downstream areas of Mahottari, Siraha, Saptari, and Udaypur. It was reported that due to the rapid melting of snow, the 180 meters deep, 650 meters wide, and 130 hectares spread Lake had expanded its surface area from 40 to 101 ha between 1984 and 2009.

Sep 25

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/water-drained-imja-lake/>

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-09-23/lowering-of-water-level-in-imja-lake-to-start-from-saturday.html>

CONSERVATIONISTS AWARDED FOR THEIR ENDLESS EFFORTS

Nepal observed the 10th National Conservation Day on Friday, lauding the engagement and roles played by the local communities in nature and wildlife conservation. WWF Nepal appreciated the four organizations and individuals with Abraham conservation awards and WWF media conservation awards 2016.

Sep 25

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/individuals-organisations-awarded-conservation-efforts/>

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-09-24/conservationists-feted-on-national-conservation-day.html>

NEPAL'S WATER, NEPALI'S INVESTMENT

With the slogan of "Nepal's water, Nepali's investment", the Ministry of Energy, Nepal introduced a programme that seeks domestic investment in the hydropower sector during the inauguration of first Siterio Sobukan Open National Karate Tournament-2016 in Bhaktapur, Central Nepal. This programme is mainly designed to address the current energy crises in the country.

Sep 25

<http://en.karobardaily.com/programme-promoting-domestic-investment-in-hydro-introduced>

ANIMAL HAVOC IN STANDING CROPS

Farmers in Nurpur city of Kangra district, Himachal Pradesh are spending sleepless nights to save their crops from the havoc of wild pigs (*Sus scrofa*), monkeys and stray animals. The rough estimation shows that the animals have damaged almost 30 to 40 percent of crops leading a large number of farmers in this region to quit farming. The authorities are emphasizing on the need of effective and viable policy to save farming.

Sep 19

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/himachal/community/pigs-monkeys-a-menace-to-standing-crops-in-nurpur/297267.html>

POACHERS IN TAMIL NADU

With the joint efforts of Kaziranga National Park, Assam Police and their team, two poachers convicted of killing a female rhino (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) and her calf on August 3 in Kaziranga National Park, were arrested on September 18 from Tamil Nadu, South India and brought to Guwahati, city in the state of Assam, north-east India, for further investigation. It has been revealed that high level political leaders are also involved in poaching racket. Other five poachers who were also involved are still missing.

Sep 21

<http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=sep2216/at054>

DRONE TO KILL MAN-EATER LEOPARD

For the first time in the Uttarakhand state of India, the forest department has deployed a drone for locating the leopard that killed two people in Ramnagar few days ago. As the angry villagers protested against the attack, chief wildlife warden permitted to shot the big cat as soon as it gets tracked. The team of five shooters is surveying the area and has spotted some pugmarks of big cat.

Sep 20, Sep 21

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/dehradun/In-a-first-drones-to-hunt-down-man-eater-leopard-which-killed-two/articleshow/54432371.cms>

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/dehradun/In-a-first-drones-to-hunt-down-man-eater-leopard/articleshow/54432547.cms>

CLEANING OF WORLD FAMOUS DAL LAKE

World famous Dal Lake which is one of the tourist attraction Centre in the Kashmir valley is being cleaned by Lakes and Waterways Development Authority (LAWDA) as the lake is being engulfed by the *Azolla* (aquatic ferns) and weeds. The main aim of cleaning the lake is to attract the tourist in the Kashmir valley and to boost up the trading and commercial communities.

Sep 21

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/jammu-kashmir/community/cleaning-of-dal-lake-in-full-swing-despite-unrest/298717.html>

WORLD RHINO DAY AT SCHOOL

Dhanasirimukh Janajati High school situated few kilometres away from Bokakhat town in the state of Assam near the Kaziranga National Park celebrated the World Rhino day with the support of Aaranyak, a leading nature and wild life NGO. The main aim of the program was to create the awareness among the students and villagers about the need on conservation of one-horned rhino (*Rhinoceros unicornis*). Speakers also highlighted about the illegal poaching of rhino in and around the park.

Sep 23

<http://www.assamtribune.com/sep2416/state056.txt>

DECREASED DEPTH OF LAKE

The Naini Lake, Nainital in Uttarakhand, which measured the depth of 25 meters according to Geological survey of India in 1979, now has lost approximately 7 meters of its depth. Since last 37 years the water body depth has also shrunk to 17.5meters. The main cause behind it could be illegal construction, sewage and waste disposal, lack of proper policies and negligence to environment related issues.

Sep 25

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/dehradun/Naini-lakes-depth-decreased-by-7m-in-last-37-yrs/articleshow/54487749.cms>

China Himalaya

TIBETAN MEDICINES: GROUND TO LABORATORIES

The hospitals in Tibet had begun research on quality standards for medical herbs since 2006, and have studied nearly 150 plants. For example a rare member of the poppy family (*Papaveraceae*), flowering plant growing only at high altitude is used in 257 traditional remedies and there are many other rare plants that act as a medicinal plant. The growing demand has resulted in the scarcity of these plants, so innovative methods are being used to conserve these plants. It is reported that Biological Research Institute of Tibetan Medicine has grown 27 endangered herbs in artificial conditions over the past decade. The new lab now houses a variety of equipment including germinators, climate incubators, soil testers and imaging systems.

Sep 20

<http://eng.tibet.cn/news/147435653836.shtml>

NO. OF TIBETAN ANTELOPE IN CHANGTANG

The Changtang National Natural Protection Area, north of the Tibet Autonomous Region with the area of 298,00000 ha has more than 40 wild animal species that has been recorded inside the protection area. During the “2016 Tibet Changtang National Natural Preservation Area Tibetan Antelope” activities, scientists confirmed the population as well as migration routes of Tibetan antelopes (*Pantholops hodgsonii*). For the first time the flight survey technology was used to observe the animal species and estimated around 150,000 Tibetan antelope at the base of the Sewu Snow Mountain.

Sep 22

<http://eng.tibet.cn/news/1474524311706.shtml>

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AT SANJIANGYUAN NATIONAL PARK

With the aim of protecting the ecosystem in the Sanjiangyuan National Park (China's the first national park pilot) , Qinghai Province, high-altitude Tibetan Plateau, new model of ecological protection with all-citizen participation was developed in April. Researchers from all over China and civilian conservationists participated and recorded 10 kinds of animals, 61 types of birds, and 93 kinds of plants thriving on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. The main goal for Sanjiangyuan National Park is to maintain both human and environmental development with active social participation.

Sep 24

<http://eng.tibet.cn/economy/news/1474682102212.shtml>

Bhutan-Himalaya

ILLEGAL TRAFFICKING OF CANNABIS

Two men were arrested at a paddy field in Genekha of Thimpu, western central Bhutan, when found rubbing the *Marijuana* dried leaves, flowers, stems, and seeds from the hemp plant (*Cannabis sativa*) on September 14. They possessed more than 100 grams of cannabis. The Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Substance Abuse Act of Bhutan (NDPSAA) 2015 has classified cannabis under schedule I of the Act, describing it as narcotic drug with no medicinal value.

Sep 21

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/two-arrested-for-illicit-trafficking-of-cannabis/>

GANGTEY-PHOBJI: THIRD RAMSAR SITE

Wetland spreading around 975 hectares from the two Gewogs (group of village) of Gangtey and Phobjikha in Wangdue Phodrang district in Central Bhutan, Gangtey-Phobjiis has been listed in Ramsar list as third Ramsar site in the country. The entire three Ramsar site are major habitats to the vulnerable Black-Necked Cranes (*Grus nigricollis*) spreading at 1,226 hectares. These wetlands provide elementary ecosystem services such as water regulation, filtering and purification, as well as numerous scientific, cultural and recreational values important for the maintenance of wetland ecosystem.

Sep 25

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/gangtey-phobji-becomes-third-ramsar-site/>

Pakistan- Himalaya

PARTRIDGES SMUGGLING VENTURE IMPEDED

Custom officials' confiscated partridges (*Perdix perdix*), a non-migratory bird from being smuggled to Manchester, United Kingdom at Benazir Bhutto International Airport on Friday. The man was caught with three black and four grey partridges worth US\$ 7495.29 as assessed by wildlife department. The birds were handed to wildlife department.

Sep 24

http://epaper.dawn.com/DetailNews.php?StoryText=24_09_2016_004_002

NENDYAR RIVER TURNING INTO LANDFILL SITE

The Nendyar River flowing through the district headquarters, Battagram, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which used to be natural source of water for the local residents, now has turned as a landfill site and has polluted the water. The pollutants of the river seemed to be the wastes thrown by locals and shopkeepers, sewage of hotels and other buildings and the wastes of slaughtered animals. Compelled to use the contaminated water, local people are suffering from different diseases and also the polluted water has affected the marine ecosystem.

Sep 24

http://epaper.dawn.com/DetailNews.php?StoryText=24_09_2016_182_010