

# Headlines Himalaya

Dec 4- Dec 10 (2017)

No. 484

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For the 484<sup>th</sup> issue of Headlines Himalaya, we reviewed 29 news from 12 sources and selected 23 happenings from five countries. In Nepal, the escalation in apple production augmented the employment opportunities in Kalikot, mid western part of the country. The 10<sup>th</sup> “Asia for Animals”, international conference was held for the first time in the capital city of Nepal., The presence of snow leopard has been recently confirmed in the Great Himalayan National Park, Dehradun, northern India. Stray dogs are now protected and nourished by Lucky Animal Protection Centre, which is a first of its kind in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 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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### MERCURY DROPS; EFFECT OF OCKHI CYCLONE

Various parts of Nepal have experienced snowfall and increasing temperature drop, as the Arabian Sea-based Cyclone Ockhi clouds entered Nepal from the western parts. Lives in Dolpa and Rukum, mid western Nepal, and Manang, western Nepal has been badly affected as the parts receive moderate to heavy snowfall. It has been reported that the locals have been unable to come out of their houses and the vehicular movement in various areas has also been affected.

**Dec 4, 5 & 6**

<http://bit.ly/2yQYaqN>

<http://bit.ly/2B5001R>

<http://bit.ly/2kFaVPS>

<http://bit.ly/2BtE09j>

<http://bit.ly/2AS1jIN>

### CARDAMOM GRADING STARTED

Cardamom (*Elettaria cardamomum*) grading has begun along with its sell in the market in Lamjung, western Nepal. The villagers have categorized cardamom into three grades according to the standards. Jumbo Jet, the highest grade of cardamom is being sold at about NPR 700 per 0.001 tons. It has been reported that this year the cardamom prices have plunged in Nepali market as its production has drastically increased in India.

**Dec 5**

<http://bit.ly/2AQFfho>

### LOCAL POTATOES FAIL TO FIND MARKET

The stockpiled local potatoes (*Solanum tuberosum*) in Birgunj, south central Nepal have failed to find market as people are willing to pay higher prices for new potatoes brought from the hilly regions of Nepal and to that imported from Punjab of India. Cold stores are selling potatoes for NPR 4 per 0.001 tonne, while the wholesale rate for imported potatoes stands at NPR 40 per 0.001 tonne. It is reported that potatoes from the hills had entered Birgunj market prior to the time than expected this year, forcing local farmers to store them.

**Dec 5**

<http://bit.ly/2A9jBIR>

### FAILURE TO MEET DEMANDS OF ORTHODOX TEA

Nepal has failed to meet the increasing demand for Nepali orthodox tea overseas. Its demand is particularly high in China and European countries. With the increasing demand for organic tea, entrepreneurs have emphasized farmers to produce tea free of synthetic chemicals.

**Dec 6**

<http://bit.ly/2kbqgIF>

### GLOBAL ANIMAL CONFERENCE HELD IN KATHMANDU

The three-day Asia for Animals Conference was held for the first time in Kathmandu, central Nepal where hundreds of experts from the world's leading animal welfare organizations have participated. The theme for this year's conference was 'Changing Human Behaviour'. According to the experts, educating local communities across Asia on scientific and humane methods to interact with animals must be promoted. Renowned experts and advocates also spoke about saving endangered wildlife, preventing cruelty to animals and ways to manage urban fauna.

**Dec 6**

<http://bit.ly/2BEgODN>

### LACK OF RAINFALL DELAYS WHEAT PLANTATION

The farmers of Baitadi, far western Nepal, have failed to sow wheat (*Triticum* sp.) in time due to delay in rainfall. The farmers are compelled to depend on the obsolete system as the majority area lacks irrigation facilities. According to the District Agriculture Development Office, out of 20,900 hectares of land used for wheat plantation, only 5000 hectares of land are facilitated with irrigation system.

**Dec 7**

<http://gorkhapatraonline.com/news/48451>

### LEOPARDS ON THE PROWL IN KHOTANG VILLAGE

A pair of leopard (*Panthera pardus*) on prowl has terrorized the villagers in the southern part of Khotang, eastern Nepal. They have rampaged through human settlement killing many cattle and goats. It has been reported that a wild cat (*Felis silvestris*) has also eaten seven goats of a locals.

**Dec 7**

<http://www.myrepublica.com/news/32176/>

### INCREASING NUMBER OF VIRAL PATIENTS

It has been reported that the number of viral fever patients with influenza like illness has been increasing in Kathmandu Valley, central Nepal, recently. Patients are visiting the hospital complaining of sore throat, headache, fever, cough and cold with some of them complaining about difficulty in breathing. Children and elderly people are the most affected one. Doctors have advised people suffering from infection to stay indoors and maintain healthy habits.

**Dec 9**

<http://bit.ly/2oyrxhK>

### POSITIVE RESULTS FROM "CLEAN THE CITY" CAMPAIGN

Kathmandu Metropolitan City's 'Clean the City' campaign has been reported to be effective as most of the roads in the city area appears neat and clean since people have stopped throwing household trash on the streets. The project which was launched on June 1 has brought many changes. Water is also regularly sprinkled on the roads to keep it dust free. As part of this campaign, trees are being planted on both sides of the roads, traffic islands and river banks, among others, to maintain greenery in the city.

**Dec 9**

<http://bit.ly/2CUurjE>

### ESCALATION ON APPLE PRODUCTION MAXIMISED OPPORTUNITIES

It had been reported that the number of people leaving for India in search of employment has dropped in Kalikot, mid-western Nepal, as the production of apples (*Malus* sp.) have jacked up in the village. All households in the villages have apple garden from which they have earned about NPR 40,000 to NPR 50,000 this year due to good production of apples. Since the people are earning the same amount living in their village, they have been inspired to stay in the village.

**Dec 10**

<https://www.karobardaily.com/news/employment/689>

## India-Himalaya

### MYSTERIOUS DEATH OF SHEEP

The death of over 30 sheep (*Ovis aries*) under few weeks has alarmed the villagers of Bhaga purana, Punjab, northern India. The residents have reported that the sheep developed symptoms like shivering and vomiting before dying. According to the local vet, some gastrointestinal parasite might be the cause of these deaths.

**Dec 5**

<http://bit.ly/2ovVbnA>

### **NOTHING BUT A CORPSE FOUND**

A forest officials team that left for Kedartal, Uttarakhand, northern India returned with a corpse of blue sheep (*Pseudois nayaur*), has been sent to Indian Veterinary Research Institute in Bareilly, northern India, for autopsy. The team was sent to examine the animals suffering from eyesight loss but could find nothing but the corpse. The team has reported the matter to the concerned authorities.

**Dec 7**

<http://bit.ly/2CRIMxx>

### **HIGH COURT ORDERS TO REMOVE FOREST ENCROACHMENTS**

High court in Shimla, northern India, has ordered the state government to remove all cases of encroachment in excess to about 0.802 hectares of land. The authorities have been directed to see that encroachers were not permitted to take any steps to reap the harvest out of and from the encroached land. The administration has been directed to use drones to keep eyes on encroached areas and to detect cases of fresh trespasser. Not only that the court had also ordered earlier to disconnect the electricity and water connections provided to all illegal structures raised by way of encroachment on government land.

**Dec 8**

<http://bit.ly/2BEsqdE>

### **SNOW LEOPARD SPOTTED IN THE NATIONAL PARK**

The scholars carrying out research in the Great Himalayan National Park in Dehradun, northern India, on rare species of animals have spotted snow leopard (*Panthera uncia*) at an altitude of about 2,700 m. The presence of the elusive species in the GHNP was confirmed for the first time in the photographic evidence through a camera trap. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has listed snow leopard, a native of Central and South Asia, as a 'vulnerable' category animal on the 'Red List' of threatened species.

**Dec 9**

<http://bit.ly/2oB6UkQ>

### **ELEPHANTS KILLED BY TRAIN**

Five elephants (*Elephas maximus*) were killed by a train in Sonitpur district, Assam, north eastern India out of which one was a male and four were females with an unborn calf. This accident happened when seven elephants were crossing the track by Guwahati-Naharlagun Intercity Express and killing them on the spot, which is a non-notified area. As reported, elephants have been dying from train hits, poisoning, poaching and electrocution and their survival in the future is questionable.

**Dec 10**

<http://bit.ly/2kDZx6W>

## **China Himalaya**

### **LEOPARD CUBS RESCUED**

Two leopard cubs (*Panthera uncia*), found by a herder in October 22, were taken to the Forestry Bureau of Biru County, eastern region of Tibet. According to the caretaker of Bureau, rescued cats will be released when they can survive in the wild. Three months old cubs were fed fresh beef and skimmed milk. The cubs are now healthier and feed on eggs and fodder, whose cost has been covered by the local government.

**Dec 9**

<http://bit.ly/2CSFrhK>

## Bhutan-Himalaya

### SNOW LEOPARDS UPGRADED TO VULNERABLE

International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has given everyone, a reason to be happy as the snow leopard (*Panthera uncia*) is no longer endangered but vulnerable, as the global population is estimated to be more than 2,500 but fewer than 10,000 mature individuals. According to the national snow leopard survey, carried out by the Department of Forests and Park Services, Bhutan, there are 96 leopards in the country, out of which 10 are in the Jigme Khesar Strict Nature Reserve (JKSNR). The study was focused on the north and central part of the reserve and was limited to 3,500 – 5,200 meter above sea level.

**Dec 4**

<http://bit.ly/2oAz8MJ>

### ESCALATED GLACIER MELTING

The Thorthormi glacier which lies in southern Bhutan, has been receding by 75.6 meters every year, which is double the rate than the 1990s. According to a research, the glacier has decreased by 1.2 kilometres in the last 16 years, due to the melting of the glacier edge and splitting of the iceberg, so it has a higher risk of Glacier Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF). As reported by the researcher, splitting of the iceberg forms the lake in front of the glacier which causes the glacier to recede more, as a result increasing the amount of water flowing into the lake.

**Dec 6**

<http://bit.ly/2zk7M0F>

### NO SAFE DRINKING WATER

Following the Royal Audit Authority (RAA) report, which was conducted in Thimphu through a third-level administrative division in Bhutan to confirm the efficiency in providing safe drinking water, it has been found that the drinking water was contaminated. The thermo tolerant coliform tests conducted from June 2016 to November 2016 showed the presence of coliform bacteria, which are unexpected to cause any illness but its presence shows the chances of other pathogens in the water. Despite notable time span, the approach for national drinking water is not yet developed to identify available options to guarantee that there is sufficient quantity and quality of water for future.

**Dec 6**

<http://bit.ly/2CxBYEI>

### GINGER PRICE DEMOTIVATED FARMERS

The farmers of Umling village, southern part of Bhutan, were downhearted as most of the gingers (*Zingiber officinale*) have rotted in the ground. According to the farmers, a rotting disease caused the decay of their cash crop which they were unable to report as it hit them only during the harvest season. The price, last year, was USD 0.46 a kilogram which has decreased to maximum of USD 0.35 whereas the market price is USD 0.77 to USD 0.93, which has discouraged the farmers to grow ginger.

**Dec 9**

<http://bit.ly/2kbvVhW>

## Pakistan-Himalaya

### BIASNESS IN GAS LOADING-SHEDDING

The inhabitants of Rawalpindi, northern Pakistan, are furious at the shortage of gas at The Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL), and the inhabitants claim the authorities have supplied undisturbed gas to the high-class areas. The gas load-shedding has caused the price of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) to double, which has only

increased the suffering of the inhabitants. Women from the Faisal Colony have even started a protest which they have warned to end only after the concerned authorities solve the problem in hand.

**Dec 4, 5 & 7**

<http://bit.ly/2ozp72n>

<http://bit.ly/2BrLMjQ>

<http://bit.ly/2BsJPIG>

#### **FINALLY A SHELTER FOR STRAY DOGS**

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, north western frontier province of Pakistan, has setup its first shelter for stray dogs (*Canis sp.*), Lucky Animal Protection Centre. The dog-lover couple, who established the shelter, wanted to do something for the mutts who were in need of attention and could cause serious health problems in human like rabies. District Health Information System (DHIS) disclosed that about 58,252 cases of dog bites had been reported last year across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

**Dec 4**

<http://bit.ly/2APVQSL>

#### **DROP IN DAM'S WATER LEVEL**

Decrease in the dam's water level has caused shortage of water, as the supply has decreased from nine million gallons daily to six million gallons in Rawalpindi, Punjab province of Pakistan. Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) has advised the consumers to use the supplied water sensibly. According to RCB, action against people who waste water will be taken in agreement with the law.

**Dec 4**

<http://bit.ly/2CxLqre>