

Headlines Himalaya

Mar 12 – Mar 18 (2018)

No. 496

Editorial Team: Sandhya Shrestha and Sindhu Pokharel

For the 496th issue of Headlines Himalaya, we reviewed 32 news from 18 sources and selected 31 happenings from five countries. In Nepal, photographic evidence of Rare Hare's (*Caprolagus hispidus*) baby ensures rediscovery of the species after more than three decades in Chitwan National Park, south central part of the country. Nepal Government has allocated eighty percent of the total budget to the agricultural sector. In India, cotton (*Gossypieae* spp.) plantation is initiated in Manipur, to revive the only spinning mill for cotton yarning in north east. In China, Tibet Autonomous Region has designated land for highland plantation of wheat (*Triticum aestivum*) and barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) for highest yields.

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**
- Decrease in the level of riverbed*
 - Data analysis of national tiger census*
 - Difficulty in removing encroachments*
 - Maize seeds distributed in Lamgunj*
 - Old vehicles taken under control in Birgunj*
 - Evidence to prove rediscovery of rare hare*
 - Delighted farmers*
 - District hospital with single doctor*
 - Eighty percent budget to agricultural sector*
 - Mushroom farming: a new source of income*
 - East-West railway barred in Chitwan National Park*
 - Waste collected in greater extent from Sagarmatha*
 - Chitwan National Park adopted ways to prevent fire*
- INDIA**
- Cotton plantation initiated*
 - Sad news for lemon cultivators*
 - Free health campaign*
 - Compensation to the victims*
 - Solar lamp distribution*
 - Inauguration of seminar*
 - Training on demarcation of forest*
 - Rhino census over*
- CHINA**
- Bird's paradise in Tibet*
 - Construction of the sealed roads*
 - Land designated for highest yield*
- BHUTAN**
- Suspension bridge over Jitichhu*
 - Bird flu virus controlled*
 - Fall in ginger price*
 - Farewell to black-necked cranes*
- PAKISTAN**
- Warning to the contractors*
 - Expansion of forest land*
 - A threat to Shimshal Valley*

DECREASE IN THE LEVEL OF RIVERBED

Due to the constant sand and pebbles mining in the Agra River in Thakre Rural Municipality, Dhading in central Nepal usually for road construction and other projects, the riverbed level has decreased by 5 meters in the last 45 years. According to one of the locals, the demand of stones keeps on rising with increase of time as the sands and pebbles found there are of high quality. With the decrease in water level due to deepening of the river it has become difficult for them to irrigate their fields.

Mar 14

<https://bit.ly/2un5Jbs>

DATA ANALYSIS OF NATIONAL TIGER CENSUS

The tiger (*Panthera tigris*) census which was carried out in five National Parks (NP) of the country has been completed and the officials are now analysing the data collected from camera trapping method and manually. The potential habitat of tiger was divided into three parts i.e. Chitwan Parsa Complex, Banke Bardiya Complex and Shukla Laljhadi Jogbudha Complex. Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC), National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC), World Wildlife Fund (WWF), protected area officials, Nepal Army, District Forest Offices and representative from the buffer zone committees had actively participated in the census.

Mar 14

<https://bit.ly/2DStWGt>

DIFFICULTY IN REMOVING ENCROACHMENTS

The District Forest Office of Banke, mid western Nepal has not been able to remove 5000 houses that were built by people through illegal process of forest encroachment. But rural municipality has not shown interest in this issue. The main challenge of this process is to separate the flood victims and non-victims and remove the people from there.

Mar 15

<https://www.karobardaily.com/news/country/3165>

MAIZE SEEDS DISTRIBUTED IN LAMGUNJ

The District Agriculture Development Office (DADO) in Lamjung, western Nepal has distributed 14 tonnes of Composite, Arun-2 and Manakamana-3 varieties of maize seeds (*Oriza sativa*) to the farmers at 50 per cent subsidy this year. According to the Chief of DADO, the distribution of maize is at its final stage.

Mar 15

<https://bit.ly/2ujnmt0>

OLD VEHICLES TAKEN UNDER CONTROL IN BIRGUNJ

More than a dozen of 20 years old vehicle have been taken under control in Birjung, south central Nepal which included 11 tempos and 1 jeep. According to the Inspector of Parsa District Traffic Police, the owner of the vehicle are allowed to sell the vehicle but are restricted from their use in roads.

Mar 15

<https://bit.ly/2DSogU7>

EVIDENCE TO PROVE REDISCOVERY OF RARE HARE

The hispid hare (*Caprolagus hispidus*) which was thought to be extinct 34 years ago has been rediscovered in Chitwan National Park (CNP), south central Nepal. The Conservation Officer has captured the photo of the baby hispid hare which thus confirmed its existing in CNP and also its rediscovery after more than three decades. He further highlighted on organising conservation awareness programs to protect such small animals too.

Mar 15

<https://bit.ly/2IRIb38>

DELIGHTED FARMERS

The people of Sindhupalchowk, central Nepal have been pleased after the construction of water tank in the village. After the April earthquake, the villagers have been facing with continuous water scarcity resulting in various household problems along with decline in vegetables production. Now, after the construction of water tank the problem has been solved.

Mar 16

<https://bit.ly/2pG26i6>

DISTRICT HOSPITAL WITH SINGLE DOCTOR

The fifty bed hospital in Jajarkot, mid western Nepal which is supposed to have eight specialist doctors and six medical officers, has only one medical officer. According to the existing medical officer, the situation of hospital is detrimental with people restricted from getting their basic rights of proper health care. This conditions were witnessed due to lack of staffs, doctors and specialists followed by unavailability of medicines.

Mar 18

<http://www.myrepublica.com/news/38217/>

EIGHTY PERCENT BUDGET TO AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

The rural municipality of Makawanpur district, central Nepal has allocated 80 per cent budget for agriculture sector to encourage the farmers to switch their production from Ganja (*Cannabis* sp) to vegetables along with other cash crops. The budget is distributed for programs like animal farming, seeds distribution, agricultural awareness programs, mushroom farming and various others.

Mar 18

<https://bit.ly/2pAAaX5>

MUSHROOM FARMING: A NEW SOURCE OF INCOME

The locals of Dhading, central Nepal have started mushroom (*Agaricus* sp) farming to earn their living. According to them, they have been benefitted with this farming business along with the reduction of the unemployment problem in the village. The produced goods are sold in different regions, viz; Kathmandu, central Nepal, Pokhara, western Nepal, and Trishuli, central Nepal.

Mar 18

<https://bit.ly/2DRJ1b6>

EAST WEST RAILWAY BARRED IN CHITWAN NATIONAL PARK

The construction of east-west metro railway from inside the Chitwan National Park (CNP), south central Nepal has been terminated. Understanding the importance for conservation of tiger (*Panthera tigris*), rhino (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) and other endangered wildlife species, the route of railway path has been changed.

Mar 18

<https://www.onlinekhabar.com/2018/03/666108>

WASTE COLLECTED IN GREATER EXTENT FROM SAGARMATHA

According to Sagarmatha Pollution Control Committee (SPCC), this year 100 tons of waste that cannot be incinerated has been collected from Sagarmatha, eastern Nepal area. According to the Chairman of SPCC, from Namche Bazar, eastern Nepal, above 50 tons of waste has been collected. Yeti Airlines and Tara Airlines are helping to bring the waste to Kathmandu for its proper management.

Mar 18

<https://www.onlinekhabar.com/2018/03/666240>

CHITWAN NATIONAL PARK ADOPTED WAYS TO PREVENT FIRE

Chitwan National Park (CNP), south central Nepal has adopted various new preventive measures to protect the wild flora and fauna from wildfire in dry season. According to the Assistant Chief Conservation Officer, they have controlled burning in different areas of the park as along with the completion of fire line construction of 80 km length and 5 m width, build in order to keep the park animal safe.

Mar 18

<https://bit.ly/2i34WPf>

COMPENSATION TO THE VICTIMS

To build confidence among victims of man elephant (*Elephas maximus*) conflict and to avoid further physical harm on elephant, the Department of Forest along with Wildlife Trust of India have distributed rice (*Oryza sativa*) among the affected villagers of north eastern India. More than 1,575 kg rice has been distributed among 63 households.

Mar 13

<https://bit.ly/2GmM7Jv>

FREE HEALTH CAMPAIGN

Free oral health camp has been conducted by Organic Majuli which benefitted around 100 farmers and their families of the area which is near to Sonapur in Guwahati, north eastern India. The main goal of this camp was to create awareness among the poor farmers about oral health and hygiene. After completion of this camp, toothpaste and toothbrush were distributed freely among farmers and another blood donation campaign has been organized by Government Polytechnic Jammu, northern India in association with Rotary Club Jammu Astha and Blood Bank of General Medical Council (GMC) in college, in which 48 college students and staff donated blood.

Mar 13 & 16

<https://bit.ly/2DTvv6N>

<https://bit.ly/2Gn1EsD>

COTTON PLANTATION INITIATED

In order to promote handloom production reduce unemployment, to provide jobs to local farmers and to improve economic condition of villagers, Manipur government has launched cotton (*Gossypieae* spp.) plantation at Kwatha village of Manipur, north eastern India. This program has been initiated to revive the only spinning mill for cotton yarning in north east. Also, the seeds will be provided free of cost for one hectare by state government.

Mar 14

<https://bit.ly/2pAA0ir>

SAD NEWS FOR LEMON CULTIVATORS

The unique lemon (*Citrus limon*) which is popularly known as 'Kachai Lemon' which is only found in one of the village of Manipur, north eastern India is apparently not getting enough attention and care it deserves. Quality and production of 'Kachai Lemon' has been decreased to 40 percent due to several factors like natural calamities, lack of interest of the concerned authority, modern equipment, financial assistance, proper transportation and communication.

Mar 14

<https://bit.ly/2G9KeMW>

SOLAR LAMP DISTRIBUTION

Solar lamps have been distributed to the locals of Kokrajhar district, north eastern India by Indian army. Altogether 250 solar lanterns have been dispensed to the villagers. The main goal of this program is to improve the living standard of the villagers of remote areas. Locals were thankful to Indian Army for their effort.

Mar 16

<https://bit.ly/2G7d44E>

INAUGURATION OF SEMINAR

Two days seminar on 'Geology and Climate of Himalaya' have started in the University of Jammu, northern India. The Vice Chancellor of the university emphasized the importance of Himalaya and talked about the threats faced due to global warming and climate change. Many speakers in the program expressed their views based on the focal theme of seminar.

Mar 16

<https://bit.ly/2DTpHtY>

TRAINING ON DEMARCATION OF FOREST

One week long training on demarcation of forest land of Jammu, northern India to protect forest from encroachment, has been concluded. This training is supposed to be helpful in raising awareness among the people and protecting forests and wildlife. After the demarcation of forest, strict action would be taken against encroachers.

Mar 17

<https://bit.ly/2G4f65F>

RHINO CENSUS OVER

As per census carried out by State's Forest Department, 102 rhinos (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) have been counted in Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary (PWS) in Morigaon district, north eastern India. PWS is the densest habitat of one horned rhinos in the world. The census was carried out after six years. Six rhinos were killed by poachers and 20 died naturally in these six years.

Mar 18

<https://bit.ly/2uiEwqD>

China Himalaya

BIRD'S PARADISE IN TIBET

Naphai Nature Reserve in Shangri-la country, Tibet, south western China is a home to varieties of birds. More than 300 Black-necked cranes (*Grus nigricollis*) are attracted to the Reserve to spend winter. The integrated ecosystem of the reserve makes it ideal for migratory birds like Black necked Cranes.

Mar 13

<https://bit.ly/2DSMpm3>

CONSTRUCTION OF THE SEALED ROADS

According to local authorities, more than 24,300 km of sealed roads has been constructed in Tibet Autonomous Region, south western China from 2012 to 2017. A total of 3,005 rural road construction projects have been launched in Tibet. More than USD 23 billion has been expended in transportation over the past five years.

Mar 15

<https://bit.ly/2G6U9Xx>

LAND DESIGNATED FOR HIGHEST YIELD

To improve farming efficiency and to get highest production, Tibet Autonomous Region, south western China has designated highland for wheat (*Triticum aestivum*) and barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) plantation. As per department, satellite remote sensing technology will be used to digitalize the information and for the proper management of the field. Tibet achieved grain output of 1 million tons last year. Infrastructures have been built for irrigation purpose as well.

Mar 18

<https://bit.ly/2G3mFJE>

SUSPENSION BRIDGE OVER JITICHHU

A 68-meter suspension bridge has been launched over Jitichhu at Namgyalchhoeling village block in Samtse district, southern Bhutan which facilitates 80 households. USD 0.037 million has been invested in the construction of the bridge under the small development program funding from the Government of India and funding from Bhutan's Government. People used to face many challenges regarding transportation before the construction of this bridge.

Mar 12

<https://bit.ly/2DSJxpg>

BIRD FLU VIRUS CONTROLLED

According to the National Center for Animal Health (NCAH), the outbreak of bird flu (H5N1) virus has been controlled in Samdrupjongkhar, south eastern Bhutan. The Incident Operation Centre (IOC) has disposed the carcass of the dead and poultry birds which were killed to prevent the spread of disease and no human deaths were reported.

Mar 15

<https://bit.ly/2IOeu1y>

FALL IN GINGER PRICE

Gingers (*Zingiber officinale*) are the main source of income of the farmers in Zhemgang, central Bhutan. At this time, farmers are disappointed as the price of ginger has decreased in the local markets as well as in auction yards due to degraded quality compared to the ginger grown in India. The Regional Agriculture Marketing and Corporative (RAMCO) officials are trying to improve the situation.

Mar 16

<http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=91847>

FAREWELL TO BLACK-NECKED CRANES

After the arrival of spring season, heavenly and majestic birds, the Black-necked cranes (*Grus nigricollis*) has left the Phobjikha Valley, central Bhutan. Records show that first group of cranes arrived in late October and left the valley by the end of February and second group arrived by December and left by mid-march. Black-necked cranes arrive there for breeding purpose and 504 birds were recorded in Phobjikha Valley this year.

Mar 16

<https://bit.ly/2uglPmn>

WARNING TO THE CONTRACTORS

The Minister of Healthcare and Medical Education has warned the contractors not to delay the construction of Rawalpindi Institute of Urology and Kidney Transplant (RIUKT) which is a public welfare project. He has directed the contractors to work in two shifts and the contractors who are not working properly will be blacklisted. He further added that no compromise shall be done to furnish the institute with new technology.

Mar 13

<https://bit.ly/2G6hNne>

EXPANSION OF FOREST LAND

Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) has urged all provincial governments including Azad Jammu and Kashmir, northern Pakistan to start forest based investment in order to reduce deforestation and to increase forest cover area. Chief Executive of PFC highlighted the importance of commercial forest and suggested ways to conserve the forest. He believes that for sustainable economic growth 25 to 30 per cent country's land should be covered with forest.

Mar 15

<https://bit.ly/2uk89b2>

A THREAT TO SHIMSHAL VALLEY

In spite of rise in global climate, as per experts more than 120 glaciers in the north Pakistan's are rising rapidly. Glaciers have grown by 1.7km since last year. Glacier blocked the Shimshal River since last October as a result lake was formed and there is a threat of flood in the coming summer months. The people living downstream are preparing for the disaster as they do not want to take any chances.

Mar 16

<https://bit.ly/2pIJ04q>